

JANUARY 1997

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# China

T O U R I S M



## **SPRING FESTIVAL: COLOURFUL RURAL CELEBRATIONS**

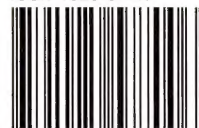
**SHENZHEN — A CITY MADE IN 15 YEARS**

**FANTASTIC TOPOGRAPHY OF XINJIANG**

**HUI — THE CHINESE MUSLIMS**

# 198

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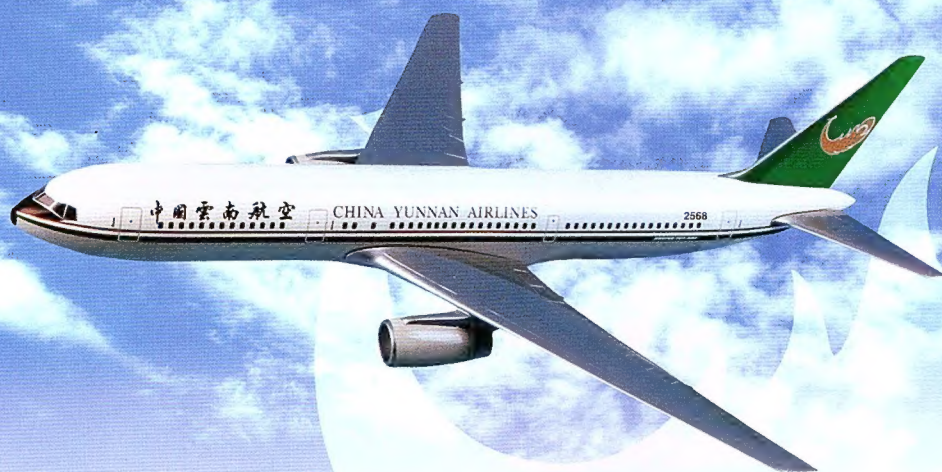


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# C O N T E N T S

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**Celebrating Spring and the New Year  
– the Traditional Way** 16

*Photos & Article by Shi Baoxiu*

From the 1st to the 15th day of the first lunar month, people living in the area around the middle reaches of the Yellow River strike various drums to celebrate the New Year. The thunderous drums seem to be able to break the frozen rivers and to call in the tide of spring. The useful references provided in this article may lead you to visit a few of the jubilant festivities during the Spring Festival vacation.



## DISCOVERIES

**The Land of Xinjiang** 34

*Photos & Article by Zhao Cheng'an*

A photographer who has been working in Xinjiang for 40 years has captured the various geographic facets of Xinjiang. Tourist routes are also introduced so that you too can experience these fantastic masterpieces of art by nature.



## FROM THE EDITOR

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**Struggle Through the Gobi Desert** 76

*Photos by Chen Huai and Wu Guanping*

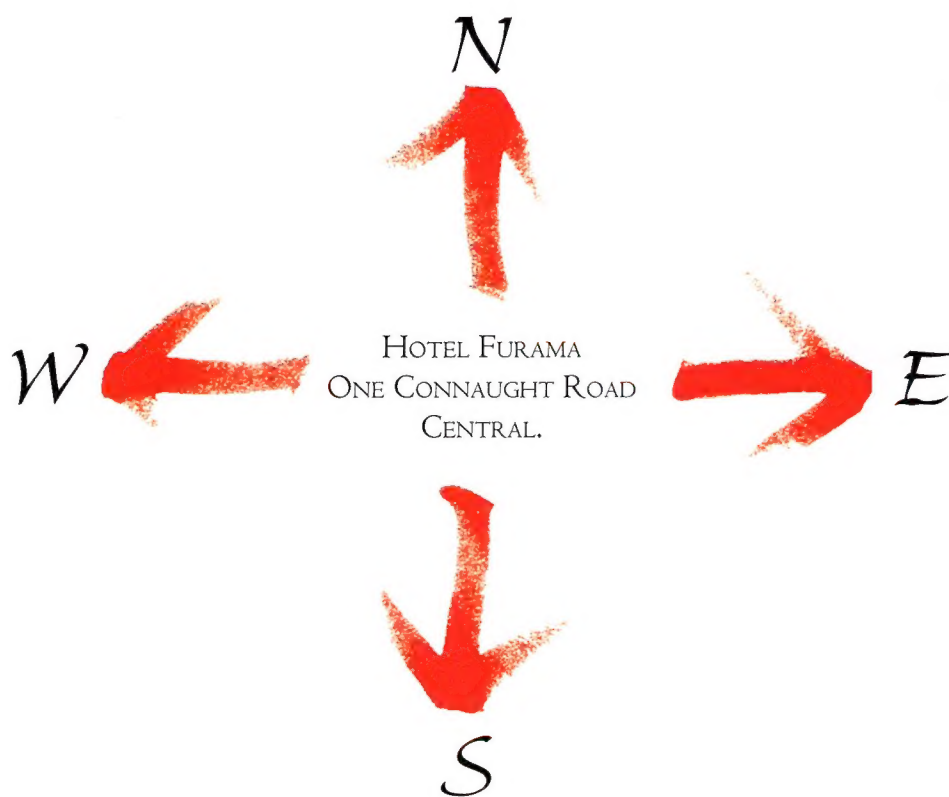
*Article by Chen Huai*

Last August, a rally took place in the vast wilderness between Lanzhou and Dunhuang. During the 10-day event, the 40 amateur racers pitted their mettle and stamina against the odds of nature.





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# C O N T E N T S

NO. 198 JANUARY 1997

## CITY PROFILE

### Shenzhen, a City Built Within 15 Years

50

*Photos by Chan Yat Nin*

*Article by Winston Yau*

The Shenzhen municipality stretches across the northern border of Hong Kong from Daya Bay in the east to the mouth of the Pearl River in the west. The first of China's Special Economic Zones, this one time fishing village is now a show piece for the rest of China.



## PEOPLE

### Hui - The Chinese Muslims

60

*Article by Huang Yanhong*

A minority ethnic group created by the ancient Silk Road, the Hui has one of the largest populations among the Chinese ethnic minorities. Through self-government, the Hui people manage to handle their own religious affairs and retain their unique customs.



## SHOPPING

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*Photos & Article by Shi Baoxiu*



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*Photos & Article by Shi Baoxiu*



## SPECIALITIES

### Restaurant Famous for Medicinal Food

66

*Photos & Article by Huang Yanhong*

It is believed that "what tastes bitter in the mouth is good for the health". Therefore, it is no mean feat to transform herbs into a tasty dish fit for the dining table. Believe it or not, a restaurant in Chengdu can offer you over 1,000 delicious herbal dishes.

## FACE TO FACE

### Henry Gao, the Grasshopper-Maker

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*Photos & Article by Li Zhixiong*

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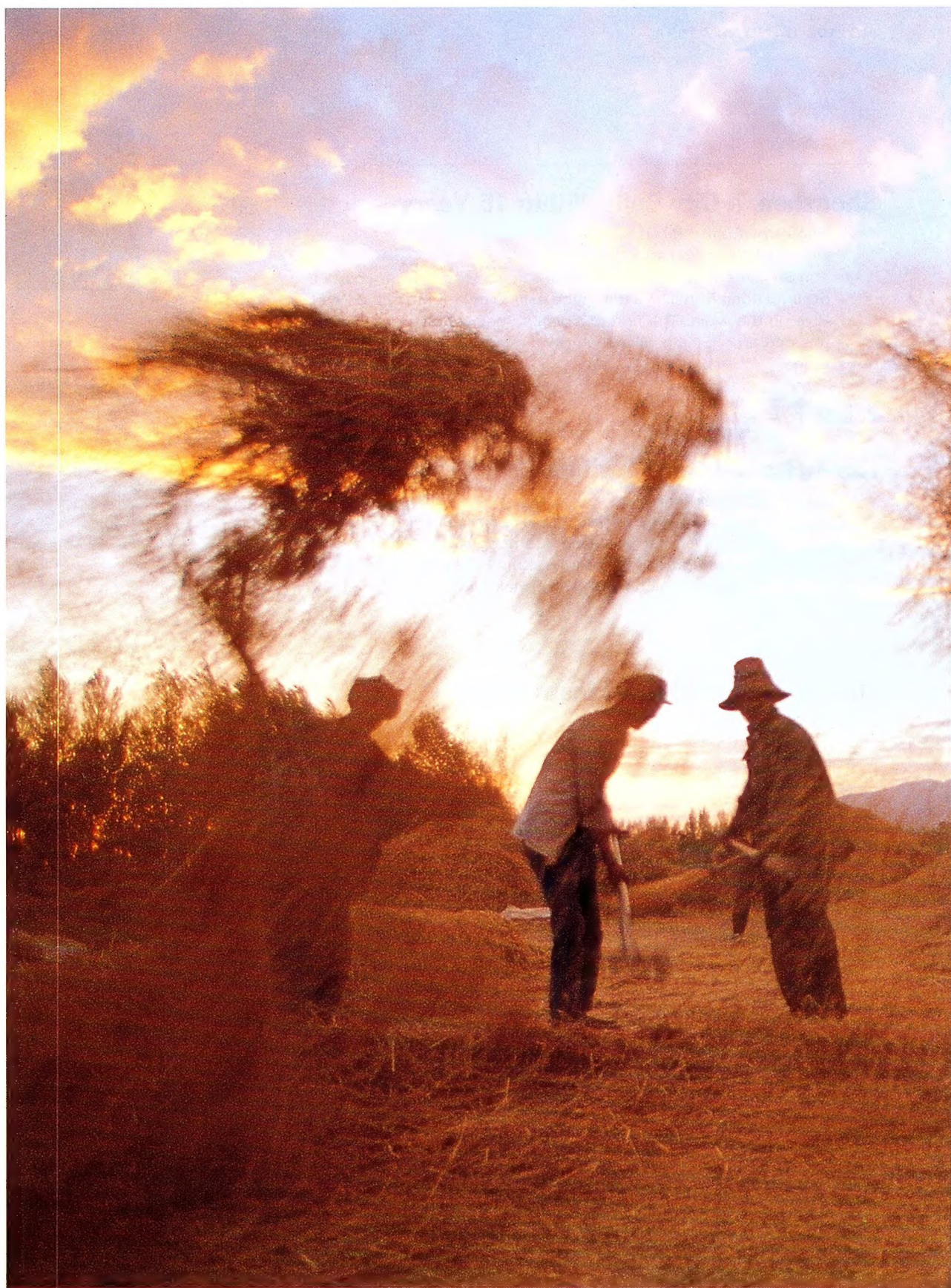
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Front Cover: Lion Dance  
(Painting by Wang Shengyi)

Wang Miao







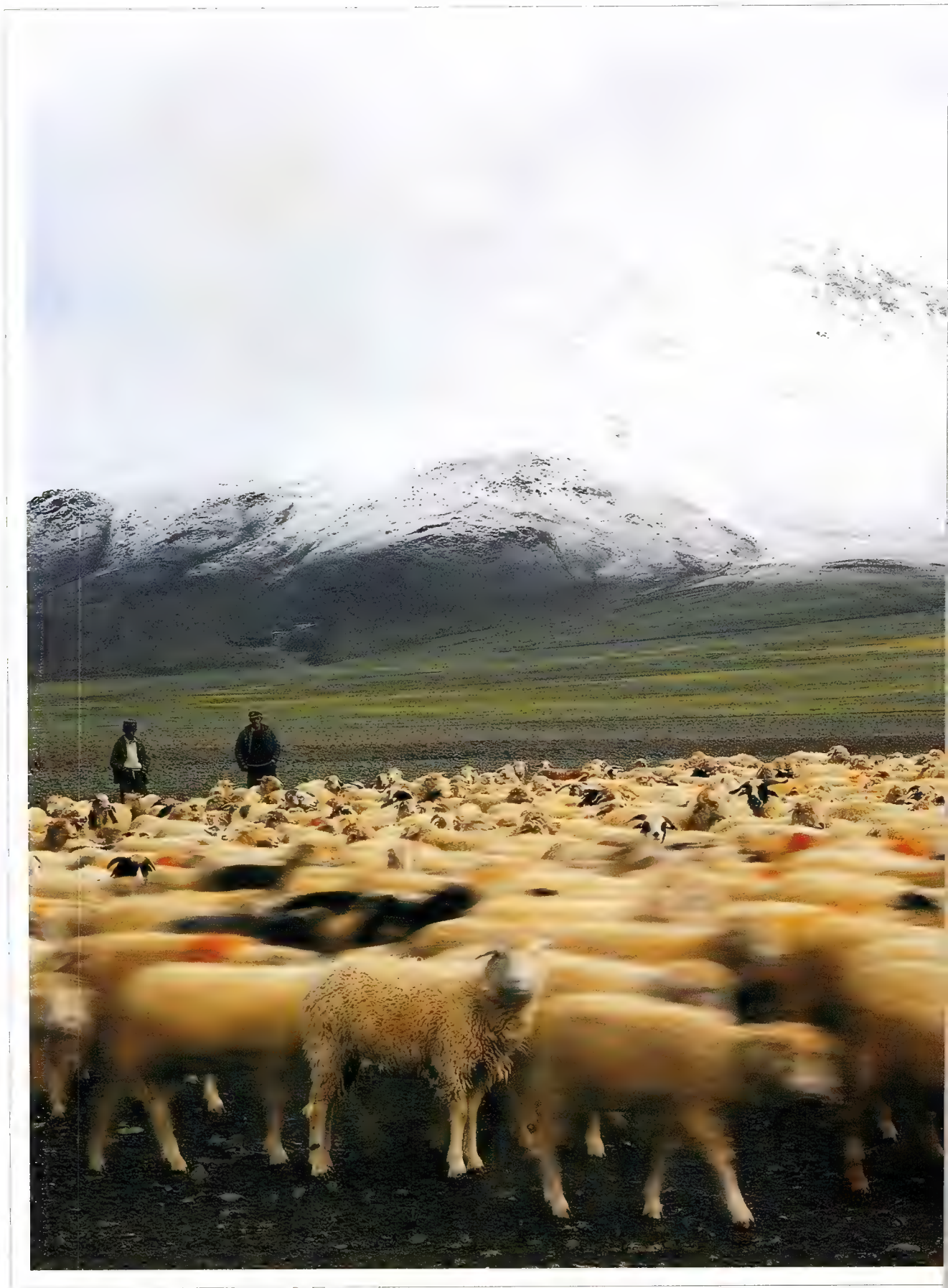


## RAINFALL OF WHEAT

*Photo by Xie Guanghui*

This picture was taken in July 1996 at Dunhuang (135mm Kodak 5017 slide). Following the sunset, the sky became a brilliant spree of glowing colours. Taking into consideration the bright sky, the photographer used a low exposure. By releasing the shutter just at the right moment – as the grains of wheat were being tossed high into the air – he gave this work both a rich colour and a strong feeling of activity. Estimated data: 24mm wide angle lens; shutter = 1/15 second; aperture = 5.6.









## THE FLOW OF SHEEP

*Photo by Lin Jinghua*

Taken at Pulan, Tibet (6x12 mm 9046 Kodak slide). The moving sheep are blurred as the photographer used a slower shutter speed together with a smaller aperture. While the rapid movement of the animals are perfectly reflected, the stationary goats, the herdsmen and the mountains are clearly featured, capturing a strong contrast between movement and tranquillity, blur and concrete. Because the aperture was focused on the scene in the foreground, the snow-capped mountains create the illusion of being surrounded by smoke instead of cloud. Estimated data: wide angle lens; shutter = 1/30 second; aperture = 11; with tripod.





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**Oil bubbling out of the ground in Karamay**





F R O M   T H E   E D I T O R

# FANTASTIC NATURE

Urban dwellers seldom have the opportunity to see the source of an energy they consume every day. While working on this issue, we editors saw – for the first time – a photograph capturing the spontaneous combustion of coal buried inside a mountain. The fantastic flames had turned the rocks into a glowing crimson, creating a mysterious night time world.

And an oil leakage mixing with sand appearing in the shape of black pearls, is also rarely seen by us city dwellers. The oil we come across is usually already in its refined form, sealed in cans or inside our cars.

The more you look into the pictures of Xinjiang, the more attractions you find, especially those taken from the air – the Tianshan Mountains, for example, look like clusters of huge Chinese cabbages; the rivers which criss-cross the mountains and deserts look exactly like the blood capillaries of the human body. Are the two worlds of macrocosm and microcosm really so far from each other? Here, they seem only to be separated by a thin line. But this is how the world is made.

The mystery of Mother Nature stimulates the mind. A falling apple led Newton to discover the universal law of gravity, and a bird in flight triggered the creation of the aircraft, an invention which turned over a new leaf in world history.

Spend some time close to nature. Your anger, impertinence and even confusion will melt away in the tranquil and peaceful world of nature. Many problems can be solved during the process of careful observation and contemplation.

**Sorghum** – a plant growing in the Gobi Desert



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H I G H L I G H T S



From the 1st to the 15th day of the first month of the lunar calendar,

**THE SOUND OF TAIPING DRUMS,**

**WAIST DRUMS, CARRIAGE DRUMS, GONGS** and

**SYMBOLS** can be heard all through the land

covering the mighty marches of

the thousand-mile long Yellow River.

# CELEBRATING SPRING AND THE



among the festival games **COLOURFUL PAINTED  
FACES** and

**RAINBOW-COLOURED FLAGS**

can be seen everywhere and

when the Chinese get down to celebrating

the coming of **SPRING** and **THE NEW YEAR**



in the **TRUE  
TRADITIONAL  
WAY,**

**THE FESTIVITIES**

are probably even more colourful than

the New Year celebrations

in other parts of the world!

# IN THE TRADITIONAL WAY

Celebrating the **COMING SPRING**  
and **THE NEW YEAR**

is just like tasting a bottle of vintage wine -  
so sweet, full-bodied and satisfying!

So, before the spring arrives in northern China,

let's have **A TASTE OF THE CELEBRATIONS** to come.

Article by Shi Baohu



# Lanzhou of Gansu

Drums to Drive Away  
the Demons



## | Huajian Village: Peace Drum .....

( 10th to 15th day of the New Year )

The Peace

Drum of Lanzhou originates from Huajian Village north of Lanzhou. All around Lanzhou the villages celebrate from the 10th to the 15th day

of the Lantern Festival. The Peace Drums, believed to have a history of 500-600 years, are beaten every day during this period.

The Peace Drum Dance of Lanzhou is very rustic and full of vitality. The dance begins as the head dancer waves a small flag, where upon trumpets are sounded sharply into the sky. Dancers then start to pound the Peace Drums like thunder, continuously beating them with a tempo which gets faster and faster, scaring birds to fly away from their nests into the sky.

After the opening drum-beating, the head dancer waves his flag again and the main performance begins. The dancers throw their drums high into the sky, then catch them and begin to play with them strapped around their waists. All the while their legs jump, kick and leap, stirring up clouds of yellow dust forming a screen of "yellow silk", giving the scene a kind of mysteriousness.

Then, the formation changes. Sometimes the dancers line up to imitate a coiling dragon, other times they run one after another in circles to form turning wheels. The drums are beaten faster and the dancing gets wilder. Within the blink of an eyelid, a second group of dancers suddenly appear on the nearby yellow slopes: they represent an invading army.

According to legend, in the early years of the Ming Dynasty, General Xu Da was ordered to wipe out the remaining Yuan troops. After successfully conquering Lanzhou, he started to attack Yongdeng County town where he met with strong resistance. By the 15th day of the first month, General Xu heard the local people beating drums to celebrate the Lantern Festival. He immediately had an idea. He ordered his soldiers to make some drums which were longer than ordinary ones so that weapons could be hid inside. He then disguised some of his soldiers as peasants and sent them into the village. Mingling amongst the villagers and pretending to join in with the festivities, they then took out their hidden weapons and conquered the town. This special type of drum was later named "Peace Drum" by the locals. They play the drum every year around the time of the Spring Festival in the wish for a peaceful time.

Even today the performers of the Peace Drum Dance all wear ancient army uniforms with a scarf around their head. But to the people of Lanzhou, the Peace Drum playing mainly symbolises the driving away of evil and the elimination of disaster.



Yuan Xuejun

### ◆ Travel Tips

**Tour programme:** Every year during the Lantern Festival period Peace Drum performances are held in the main streets of Lanzhou. If you want to see the most traditional Peace Drum Dance, take the bus from Lanzhou to the Huajian Village, 60 kilometres to the north, where all the villagers are excellent drum players and masters of martial arts. They incorporate their skills into the Peace Drum dances to make their performance as a whole very unique.

**Accommodation:** You may lodge at any of the hotels in Lanzhou. There are no hotels in Huajian Village, so you should plan to return to Lanzhou on the same day.

**Weather:** On average temperatures are just above freezing point and rather dry.

1. As the performance reaches its climax, a cloud of yellow dust is thrown up, making the scene even more exciting. (by Yuan Xuejun)









## Lingtai of Gansu

Auspicious Songs

### ◆ Travel Tips

**Tour programme:** Take the long-distance bus from Baoji City to Lingtai County – the journey takes four hours. Festivals and singing performances are held in large villages near the county town from the 13th to 16th day of the first month of the lunar calendar.

**Accommodation:** There are hotels in Lingtai County town.

**Weather:** During the Lantern Festival (the 15th day of the first month) the average temperature is 2-3°C and the air is rather dry.

### | Lingtai Festival ..... ( 13th to 16th day of the New Year )

Lingtai is situated at the border of Gansu and Shaanxi and neighbours the three Shaanxi counties of Fengxiang, Linyou and Qianyang. Their close proximity to one another has meant that over the years their cultures have blended – traditions for celebrating the spring festival have mixed, creating a unique style and atmosphere.

They similarly celebrate the Horse Festival and Underground Platform Festival in the same way, as well as the popular "Lions Playing Silk Balls" dance of Gansu.

The villagers of Lingtai mainly live in cave dwellings, most of which are below ground. When the village festival team performs to the households, the courtyards in front of the cave dwellings beneath the ground become their stage and the villagers watch on from the roofs of their cave dwellings. What an extraordinary "theatre"!

Lingtai, like Shaanxi, has the custom of a singing troupe visiting each of the village households at festival time. The troupe moves around the village with trumpets, drums and gongs blaring.

The song in the eastern Gansu festivals is called "Four Tunes" because it is formed by four songs. The tune itself is always the same, however the words are changed to fit each household. If the family is a young couple, they might sing: "Please listen carefully, Brother Zhang! We wish that, as a couple, you are with one heart and will turn the yellow soil into gold." When they come to the door of an experienced farmer, they would sing: "Call you Uncle Wang! The hills and plains are vast, grain fills your warehouse.

Cattle and sheep are jumping, a good harvest is awaiting you." When the song comes to an end, red lions begin to dance in the courtyard, to the delight of the family. The sweet memory of the auspicious greetings of the "Four Tunes" will make the family happy in the following days or even over the whole new year.

1. Making up for the performance. ( by Yang Yankang)

2. With such a courtyard as the "stage" the audience can see all the actors and actresses clearly. (by Wang Zhenshan)



Qin Ling









# Baoji of Shaanxi

Homage to  
Ancient Figures



The village festivities gradually become more intense after the 10th day of the first lunar month and reaches its climax around the Lantern Festival (the 15th day of the first lunar month). For two or three days, the frantic sound of drums and gongs being beaten can be heard in almost every village and town, and hundreds of coloured flags can be seen fluttering in the biting cold wind. At this juncture, it is believed that ancient emperors, generals and ministers, as well as men of letters and beauties, will come back to life to greet the coming spring and join in the celebrations with the common folk. It inspires some people to believe that the wheels of time have turned back.

## | Linyou and Qianyang: Communal Festivity on Flat Land .....

( around the Lantern Festival ) In the mountainous areas of Linyou and Qianyang counties, the most famous festivity is that held on flat land. It is a very simple celebration: all the performers dress up in ancient costumes and carry ancient weapons; amidst the simple tones of drums and gongs, they fight and chase one another through the streets and courtyards like ancient soldiers in battle. As night falls, each family sets

light to a bonfire and the "infantrymen" come and visit each family to give a performance around the fire.

## | Longxian: Festivity on Horse Back .....

( 14th to 16th day of the first month ) In the mountainous regions of Longxian County the horse riding carnival in Longxian County is the most well known of its kind. Around the period of the Lantern Festival, local farmers attire themselves in costumes to resemble ancient figures. They also colour their faces – red to represent Guan Yu, yellow to imitate Qin Qiong, pink for Zhao Yun and black to symbolise Zhang Fei.... Riding on horse back, they travel to the county seat where they congregate in what is called "the gathering of the ancient heroes". As soon as everyone is assembled, a canon is fired and these "heroes", wearing all kinds of armour and carrying various weapons and flags, parade through the main streets of the county town as if setting off for the border to engage in battle.



## | Baoji and Meixian: Mountain-Frame Festivity .....

( 14th to 16th day of the first month ) One variation of the festivity on carts can be seen in the Baoji and Meixian counties on the Weihe River plains. A structure resembling a mountain is built and paraded through the village. On the four or five tiers of the fake mountain are several boys and girls in the disguise of various immortals, kings, ministers and generals, as well as traditional opera characters. As the cart moves slowly through the crowd, the children wave their long sleeves in the air and make all sorts of gestures. It is really an amazing sight.

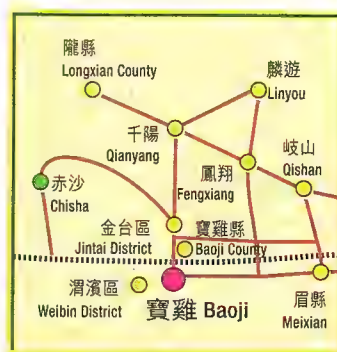
## | Chisha: "Bloody" Kuaihuo Festivity .....

( 15th day of the first lunar month ) In Chisha Town deep in the Longshan Mountain of Baoji County, a bloody scene is re-created every three years. The local people call it the kuaihuo festival. As the performers leave their secret dressing rooms, onlookers are horrified by what they see, because the scenes are truly appalling: A sharp axe cuts into the head of one man, a sword or a sharpened stick pierces the heart of another....

Behind the performance lies the story of Wu Song who, avenging his elder brother, kills Ximen Qing and other nine villains. The tale serves to teach people that justice will always triumph over evil.







## ◆ Travel Tips

**Tour programme:** In Baoji Prefecture, Fengxiang, Qishan, Longxian, Qianyang, Meixian and Linyou counties as well as the Jintai and Weibin districts of Baoji City all hold large and small spring welcoming carnivals after the Spring Festival. One can use Baoji as a base and then get in touch with the City Folk Art Centre (Shao Yong, Tel: 0917-3222434) to organise an itinerary according to one's personal preference for the different festivities and the performance dates.

As the "flat-land" festival in Linyou is held deep in the mountains and the *kuaihuo* performance in Chisha Town is held only once every three years, it is better to plan one's itinerary after making inquiries to the Baoji City Folk Art Centre.

**Transport:** The distance between Xi'an and Baoji is less than 200 kilometres. A regular bus service runs from Baoji to the various county seats and major towns.

**Accommodation:** All the county seats have hotels providing standard rooms with toilet.

**Climate:** Around the Lantern Festival season, the temperature in the Baoji area is 8°C during the day, falling to 0°C at night.

1. Traditional costumes and performances, at the communal festivities of Longxian County. (by Li Zhanqi)
2. In the *kuaihuo*, the makeup is really scary. (by Li Shengli)
3. Performers on their way from village to village. (by Lian Yongcheng)



# Yan'an • Yulin and Ansai of Shaanxi

Drums on  
the Land of Loess

Although the loess plateau in north Shaanxi is not densely populated and the local people do not live a life of affluence, their enthusiasm for carnivals to greet the coming spring has always been high, and their unique style of festivities enjoy some fame abroad.

**Yulin and Yan'an: Yangge Dance Performance** ..... ( 8th day of the first month to the Lantern Festival ) The seventh day of the first lunar month is considered the day of human beings. After this day, folk in the Yan'an and Yulin area will hold *yangge* dance performances for several days in a row. This is the most lively and exciting time for village and communal activities throughout the year. When the time comes, the organisers move the drums and gongs from the offices of the village council to higher, more spacious grounds. The drums are then

## ◆ Travel Tips

**Tour Programme:** Around the 15th day of the first lunar month, Ansai County holds its own large-scale waist drum performances; in the various districts and counties the villagers stage *yangge* dances; during the Spring Festival the Suide, Mizhi and Hengshan counties hold *yangge* dance performances.

For detailed information, please contact the local authorities in charge of cultural affairs or the local art and culture centres.

**Transport:** Trains and a long-distance bus service operate to Yan'an, and flights and a long-distance bus service to Yulin.

**Accommodation:** Yan'an and Yulin can provide convenient lodging facilities for travellers.

**Climate:** The winter in the area is very cold and dry. During the Spring Festival, temperatures drop to -15°C at night. Travellers should pack warm clothing and lip salve.

beaten and eventually the whole village, old and young alike, are drawn out of their homes. On such an occasion, they put on their best clothes and paint their faces in various colours.

The *yangge* dance teams are formed by men and women playing various historical or legendary figures and led by *santou*, people holding umbrellas. They visit every family in the village where they are treated to something – perhaps a pot of mild liquor, two packs of cheap cigarettes or a plateful of home-made cakes. The welcome makes the *yangge* team dance with even more excitement.

The *yangge* dance in north Shaanxi falls into many



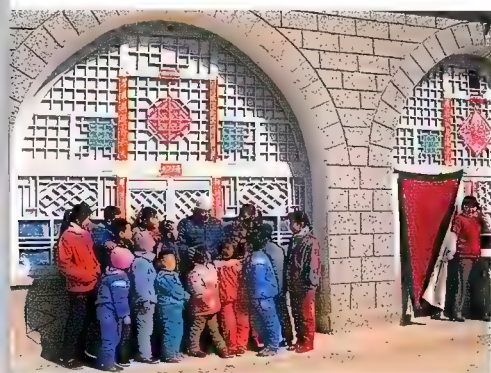




different schools of which the most unique ones are *guojie* (street-walking), *paimen* (door to door), *dachang* (square dance) and *zoudeng* (lantern-walking). Nevertheless, all schools are composed of the

same elements such as *tachangzi* waist drum playing, land-boat walking and bamboo-horse riding. When night falls, the ground is lit by bonfires and eight oil lamps around which several competitions are performed at the same time.

It is said that the *yangge* dance in north Shaanxi dates back to the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Period (770-221 B.C.), and was mainly used to greet the gods or exorcise evil spirits. Today, it is mainly performed as a means of celebration to express people's hope for happiness.



### 3 | Ansai: Waist Drum Performance

..... ( around the Lantern Festival )

Of the *guojie* (street-walking) *yangge* dance, the most impressive is the waist drum performance from Ansai County which evolved from the old waist drum performance popular in Hengshan County, yet it is much larger in scale than its predecessor. Each band comprises more than 60 drummers and if several bands play together, which is sometimes the case, the procession can stretch for several kilometres. All the drummers are dressed in ancient-style battle costumes with red waist belts and scarves.

When performances are given in public, the waist drums are accompanied by big drums, gongs, cymbals and *suonas*. The rhythm is quick and forceful, like hailstones hitting the dry earth in summer. The frantic dancing of the drummers makes the view even more impressive.

1. The formation of an Ansai waist drum dance is indeed a magnificent sight. (by Du Baotong)
2. As night falls, the villagers turn out to walk the "battle formation" (by Wang Miao)
3. Awaiting the *yangge* dance team. (by Du Baotong)
4. A waist-drum dancer (by Du Baotong)







# Beijing

Demonstration of Traditions

Beijing is a good place to visit during this festival season if you like temple fairs. They are usually held in temples once frequented by the emperors and are not only large in scale but last from just before the year end to the 15th day of the first month of the lunar calendar. From the suburbs to the heart of the city you will see "dragons" coiling and "lions" leaping, while drums being beaten and gongs vibrating.

**| Temple of the Earth: Ancient Fair** ..... ( 1st to 5th day of first month ) The Temple of the Earth was once the place where the Qing Dynasty emperors worshipped the land. Today it has become the "place for juggling" during the Spring Festival. Acrobatics and juggling which were once performed in the olden days in the Tianqiao area have come alive again here. Somersaults, catapult shooting, magic shows, juggling with jars, two-man comedy shows, etc., the performers are mostly descendants of the old artisans of Tianqiao.

After watching the performances, people are lured to a "food street" where it is possible to taste all sorts of traditional Beijing snacks as well as famous specialities from all parts of China.

**| Dragon Pool Lake: Flowery Festival** ..... ( 28th day of 12th month to 8th day of first month )

The "Flowery Festival" of Guoyuan Village in Fengtai District is famous for Walking on Stilts, a traditional show of 300 years. Performers, using two-foot-long stilts, can not only walk around with ease but also ascend a platform two metres high and then jump down. Their competitors, performers from Beizhaowa Village of Changping County can not only balance on one stilt and do the splits, but can even jump onto a three-feet high table.

Another attraction is the dozens of farmers from Panggezhuang Village in Daxing County who have a different style of playing the percussion instrument. People are dazzled by the sight.

**| White Clouds Temple: Folk Temple Fair** ..... ( 29th day of 12th month to 5th day, first month ) The temple fair at the White Clouds Temple has a history of several hundred years. In the temple compound are all kinds of traditional Beijing performances, such as cross-talk, ballad singing, puppet shows, juggling, etc.

1. Tea being poured from a large bronze pot at the Temple of Earth fair. (by Yuan Xuejun)
2. The stilt-walking of Liangyuan Village, Beijing, already has a history of more than 300 years. (by Wang Wenbo)
3. The "comical county magistrate" (by Wang Wenbo)







### ◆ Travel Tips

Main temple fairs in the city: Temple of the Earth; Dragon Pool Lake Flowery Festival; Great View Garden Fair (1st to 5th day of first month); White Clouds Temple Folk Fair; Temple of the Sun Lantern Festival (10th to 15th day of first month); Drum Tower Cultural Temple Fair (23rd day of 12th month to 5th day of first month); and Great Bell Temple Fair (2nd to 6th day of first month). Spring Celebration/Activities in the suburbs: Shijingshan District Garden Party (2nd day to 5th day of first month); Lantern Street in Haidian District (10th to 16th day of first month); Ice-carving Show at Longqingxia of Yanqing County (from 1st month to 2nd month); Lantern Festival of Changping County (10th to 16th day of first month); and Flag Show in Mentougou District (10th to 15th day, first month).

**Transport:** A special bus service operates during the spring celebrations from the city to the suburbs, returning the same day.

**Weather:** By the Spring Festival period the temperature is still low, eiderdown clothes and padded shoes are necessary.







Qin Junxiao

# Xinjiang and Linfen of Shanxi

Impressive Drums and Gongs

"All types of drums and gongs can be found in Shanxi, and Shanxi drums and gongs are the best under heaven"

One might be under the impression that because this is a local Shanxi saying that it might be a little bit biased if not boastful. In truth, Shanxi does rank the highest for its variety of drums and gongs, its performers, as well as the number of the tunes that can be produced.

Drums and gongs have accompanied generations of people throughout their lives for thousands of years and are always used to create the atmosphere at various ceremonies, such as at birthday celebrations, weddings, funerals, as well as celebrations for a good harvest, the opening of a new business, the completion of a building project, rain praying and exorcising evil spirits. At carnivals to greet the coming spring, drums and gongs play a very important role; their deafening sound can be heard everywhere.

Local folks in Shanxi always use drums and gongs to build up the climax for spring-greeting festivities. All other activities, such as walking on stilts, land-boat dancing and lion dancing have to withdraw into the background as there is no way they could compete with the drums and gongs for glory.



## ◆ Travel Tips

**Tour Programme:** Jiangzhou is an ancient name nowadays referring to Xinjiang County. It can be reached by train from Xi'an or Taiyuan. Linfen lies to the north of Xinjiang County and is a main station on the railway line from Xi'an to Taiyuan. Hancheng lies to the west of Xinjiang County on the other side of the Yellow River; people can get there by train or long-distance bus from Xinjiang County. Around the Lantern Festival, Xinjiang, Linfen and Hancheng all hold drum and gong performances that last for several days.

**Accommodation:** Lodging in all three places is easy to find as they all have fairly well equipped hotels.

**Climate:** Around the Lantern Festival, the temperatures are normally 5°C during the day falling to 0°C at night.

**| Jiangzhou: Drums on Horse-Pulled Carts** ..... ( around the Lantern Festival ) The drum and gong performing bands from different parts of Shanxi not only play different tunes but also demonstrate different styles; the performances from Linfen are impressive and performances from Taiyuan are dignified while those from Jiangzhou are magnificent.... Here, the



drums are pulled by horse cart, a tradition which evolved from legends where drums were carried on war chariots in ancient times. Each cart is pulled by several dozen, if not a hundred, oxen, horses, donkeys and mules. This indeed recreates the picture of chariots ready to go into battle. Each of the carts carries a gigantic drum with a diameter of two metres. The huge drum, sometimes beaten





by a single person or sometimes by several people, produces a thunderous noise.

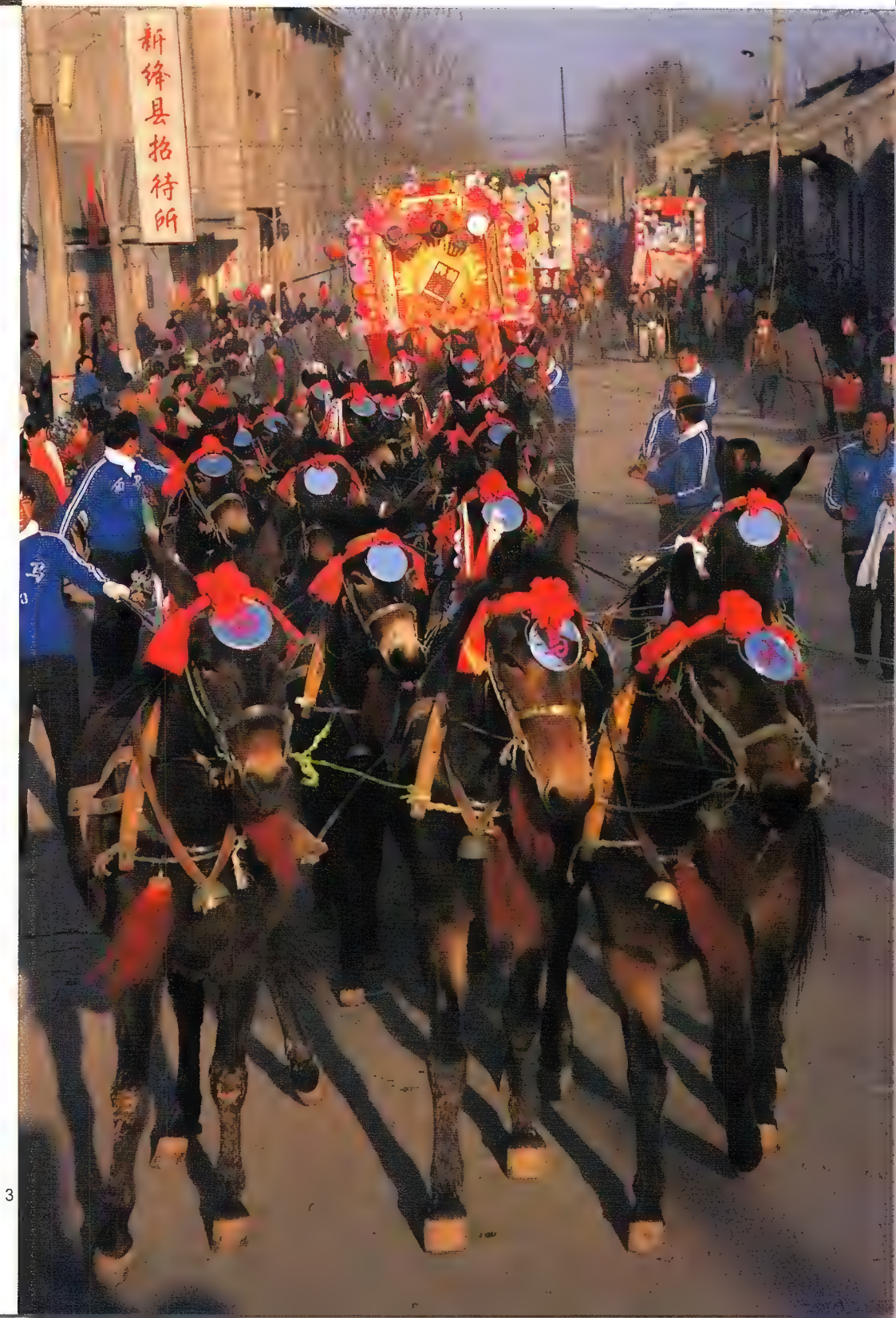
## Linfen: Unique Drum and Gong Performance .....

( around the Lantern Festival )

The performance at Linfen is truly impressive: While 100 strong young men dance and take turns to beat a gigantic drum, another few hundred people, each carrying a flat drum, gather into a huge formation. In Shanxi, there is also a sort of solo drum performance, seven or eight drums of various size are tied to the body of one drummer who beats them in turn. Each of the drums produce a different sound and tone allowing the player to produce his own music score.

In Shanxi, women also participate in the performances. In recent years, hundreds of young women dress themselves in ancient costumes to compete with the men's teams.

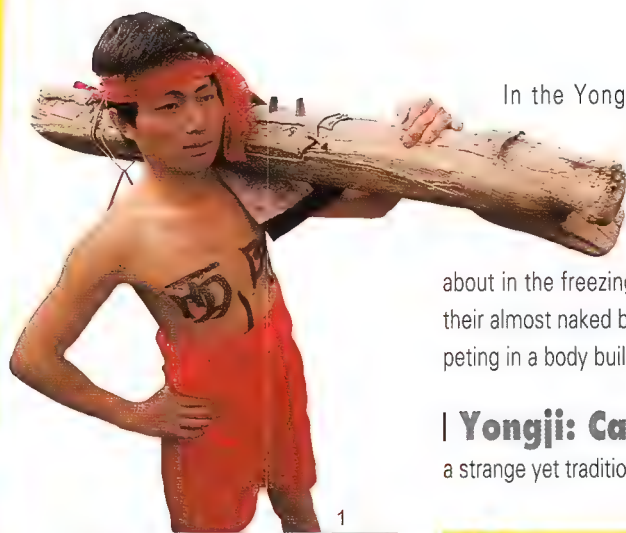
1. Women, too, can produce a deafening sound. (by Yu Zhixin)
2. Growing up amidst the sound of drums and gongs. (by Yu Zhixin)
3. In Jiangzhou, a cart-carried drum calls to mind an ancient battle scene. (by Shan Xiaogang).





# Yongji and Ruicheng of Shanxi

Carrying Ice



1

In the Yongji and Ruicheng regions of southern Shanxi, the celebration to welcome the spring is particularly unusual: young men walk about in the freezing cold weather to show off their almost naked bodies, as if they were competing in a body building contest.



2

**| Yongji: Carrying Ice on Bare Back** ..... On the day of the Lantern Festival, a strange yet traditional carnival is held at Changwang Village, Yongji County. At this time of year the land in southern Shanxi is still frozen hard. Yet, the young men march about in the fields, with their arms, legs and upper bodies completely exposed. The procession is headed by a man carrying a thick tree trunk, followed by a group of lads wearing brightly coloured towels on their head and carrying a huge block of ice on their back!

This peculiar ritual stems from an extraordinary story.... In the later stage of the Qing Dynasty, a brave young man from the village joined the army of the Taiping Uprising and participated in an expedition northwards to the Jinpu Ferry (Jinpu Ferry) on the Yellow River. It was winter and the troops of the

Qing Court that they were fighting against had built a defence line of fire. The young soldier asked his commander to pick 100 soldiers for him. He asked each of them to carry a large piece of ice on their back. He led them to a charge against the Qing troops and broke through the defence line.

**| Ruicheng: "Muscle Showing"** ..... ( second day of the second lunar month )

Surprisingly, the ice-carrying festivity is not unique to Changwang Village – it has a counterpart just 50 kilometres away in the Kehe, Xiyang and Yangxian villages of Ruicheng County. Strong men carry ice on their bare shoulders in honour of the God of Mount Taishan. In Ruicheng, people carry fodder chop-pers, door flanks and anything that can show off their strength.



3

## ◆ Travel Tips

**Tour programme:** Both Yongji and Ruicheng counties fall under the jurisdiction of the Yuncheng Prefecture of Shanxi Province. To get to Changwang Village to see the ice-shouldering festival, one can take any train going to Yongji Station from Taiyuan, Beijing or Xi'an. Then, take a bus to Changwang Village. To get to Kehe, Xiyang and Yangxian villages for the "muscle showing meet" catch a train in Xi'an for Fenglingdu (Fengling Ferry) and from there change to bus for the Ruicheng county seat, then to these villages.

**Accommodation:** One can stay at one of the county-run hotels and, using it as a base, return there after visiting each of the festivities.

**Climate:** Daily average temperature, 5°C ; windy.



1. The ice carriers are headed by a man carrying a tree trunk. (by Shan Xiaogang)
2. Playing the role of the Monkey King (by Shan Xiaogang)
3. After the three-holed blunderbuss is fired, the ice-carrying parade begins. (by Shan Xiaogang)



# Chengdu of Sichuan

Watching the  
"Fire Dragons"



In Sichuan along the Yangtse River the people have a different way of celebrating. In preference to beating drums the people here prefer to stage a performance called "Fire Dragons" where lightly clad men dance in the freezing cold night to prove they are not afraid of fire.

## 1 Huanglongxi Town: Playing Fire Dragons ..... (on the 2nd day of the first month)

The venue for the "Fire Dragons" is called Huanglongxi (Yellow Dragon Stream), an ancient town less than 50 kilometres away from Chengdu. On the 2nd day of the New Year, the small town is packed with visitors, most of whom are tourists from Chengdu.

As night falls, the townsfolk begin to light the "12 Lanterns of Zhuge Liang" also known as the "Heavenly Lanterns". They rise into the sky like balloons, lighting up the night. Firecrackers announce the "Fire Dragon's" entrance. A team of practically naked men form the body of the long "Fire Dragon". The dragon is quite transparent as it is lit inside by candles. After another round of firecrackers, the "burning of the fire dragon" begins. Onlookers shoot fire toward the dragon's head and tail with "fire guns" bought nearby. Some of the shots hit the dragon players, but they give no reaction and continue with their performance. When all the shots are fired, the "Fire Dragon" stops dancing. Looking closely at their backs, none of them showed any sign of being burned! While putting on his clothes, one strong man exclaimed: "How warm it is on this cold night!"

*Translated by M. Qiang and Li Zhenguo*



1. A dragon dance performed in Hubei (by Shen Chuqiu)
2. The "fire dragon" glides and swirls while onlookers throw burning javelins at it. The dragon dancers seem to pay no heed to the flying sparks. (by Wang Miao)

### ◆ Travel Tips

**Transport:** There is a regular bus service between Chengdu and Huanglongxi Town.

**Accommodation:** Accommodation and dining in town are convenient.

**Climate:** During the Spring Festival period, the temperature around Chengdu is about 8°C during the day but gets colder at night – but still above freezing. Warm clothing is required.







Qian Zhiyu

## TIPS ON JOINING THE CELEBRATIONS

**Timing:** Celebrations for Spring Festivals in northern China are held at different times depending on their different themes. Temple fairs are normally held around the Spring Festival, *Yangge* Dances are performed between the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival, and grand gong and drum festivals and village celebrations are held around the Lantern Festival (15th day of first month).

**Location:** Generally traditional spring celebrations are held annually in cities, towns or townships, but their specific locations are not fixed.

**Information:** Information about the different activities are advertised in local newspapers and on TV by the various cities and counties. In areas where townships or villages hold their own unique spring celebrations, the local cultural offices can provide the necessary details and information.

**Suggested 8-day Itinerary:** Arrive in Xi'an on the 10th day of the new year. The next morning, take a bus or train to Yan'an and book into a hotel. On the morning of the 12th day, visit one of the nearby villages to watch the *Yangge* Dance, and visit the Cool Hill and the Pagoda Hill grottoes in the afternoon. On the 13th day, take a bus to see the frozen waterfall at Hukou via Yichuan, returning to Yan'an on the same day. On the 14th day, watch the 100-man waist drum performance, and visit the Folk Arts Exhibition at Ansai which displays paper-cuts, clay sculptures, embroidery and peasants' paintings. Return to Yan'an on the same day, and take a night bus back to Xi'an, staying overnight. On the 15th day, go to Baoji City of Fengxiang County to watch the various spring celebration performances. Return to Baoji on the same day and stay overnight in a hotel. On the 16th day, take a bus to Shanglong County to see the horse fire shows, and return to Baoji on the same day. Take a bus or train back to Xi'an, and stay overnight. Leave for home the next day.

**Suggested 15-day Itinerary:** Fly to Beijing on the 2nd day of the New Year. On the 3rd day visit the temple fair at the Temple of the Earth, and the Dragon Lake Flowery Fair and the White Clouds Temple

Fair on the 4th. On the 5th day visit the Garden Party at Shijingshan and the Ice-carving at Longqingxia. On the 6th day visit Beijing and its *hutongs* (ancient lanes), enjoy tea at one of the teahouses showing performances of Peking Opera and Beijing folk ballad singing. The next day take a train to Taiyuan and stay overnight in a hotel. On the 8th day take a bus to Mount Wutai staying overnight at a hotel on the mountain. Return to Taiyuan on the 9th day, visit the Jinci Temple and then take a bus to Linfen and check into a hotel. On the 10th day visit the Iron Buddha Temple, East Mountain Temple and Lesser West Land and return to Linfen on the same day. Take a bus to visit the frozen falls at Hukou the next day and return to Linfen the same day. On the 12th day watch the Gong and Drum Dance at Linfen, and then take a bus to Houma. On the way there visit the Folk Art Museum and the Qiao Family Building (where the film "Red Lantern" was shot), and lodge overnight at the Houma Guesthouse. Take a bus to Xinjiang on the 13th to watch the Jiangzhou Carriage and Horse Gong and Drum Performance. Take a bus to Yuncheng on the 14th and visit the Temple of Lord Guan at Xiezhou. After that, take a bus to Yongji and lodge at the county's guesthouse. Take a bus to Changwang Village of Yongji County to watch the performance of "carrying ice blocks" on the morning of the 15th day, and go to see the famous murals in Yongle Palace in the afternoon. Afterwards, take a bus to Fenglingdu, from where you can take a train to Xi'an. Visit the places of interest in Xi'an on the 16th day, and leave for home on the 17th.

**Alternatively:** After watching the Jiangzhou Gong and Drum Performance on the 14th day, take the train from Houma and travel to Xi'an directly. On the 15th and 16th, visit village performances of spring celebrations at Baoji. Or

On the 12th day leave Linfen, take a bus to Yan'an arriving on the 13th. Watch the *Yangge* Dance and Ansai Waist-Drum Dance in Yan'an on the 14th and 15th. Arrive at Xi'an on the 16th, and return home on the 17th.





敦煌  
Dunhuang  
Cigarettes



Dunhuang Grottoes, built up from AD 386-1367 (the Northern Wei Dynasty - the Yuan Dynasty), are among the greatest existing treasure troves of Buddhist art in the world. Dunhuang Cigarettes, one of the famous brand manufactured by Shanghai Cigarette Factory (1925-1995), China.



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DISCOVERIES

# The Land of Xinjiang

Photo & Article by Zhao Cheng'an







# A PHOTOGRAPHER FASCINATED BY XINJIANG

Forty years ago Zhao Cheng'an could hardly believe it when he landed what he saw as the best job in the world: becoming a photographer in communion with great nature. Since then he has become one of the few Chinese cameramen who often drive through the great wilderness of the Gobi Desert or fly aboard an aeroplane to catch a bird's-eye view of the mysterious land of Xinjiang.

A native of Ankang, Shaanxi Province, he arrived at the famous oil field Karamay, bringing with him a full bag of fairy tales about the Western Territory that he had read in the classical novel *Journey to the West*. There he befriended local geologists and acquired a wealth of knowledge about geology. This enabled him to combine geological knowledge with art and thereby put his photographs on a scientific footing.

The wilderness is enough to deter many others. But not Zhao Cheng'an. He sees his frequent visits to the deserts as golden opportunities to closely observe the mountains, sand dunes and deserts and experiment with new concepts and new photographic perspectives. The relative cosiness of the jeep has never



confined him to the highways. He is often seen rambling through uncharted territory in search of photo opportunities.

His efforts have been paid off. Within a period of four years he has covered more than a 100,000 kilometres and published two large photo albums which give comprehensive insights into the geological features of the Tarim and Junggar basins.

Whenever Zhao has finished an expedition, he pencils the route onto a map of Xinjiang. By now the map has been covered with a spider's web, a vivid demonstration and souvenir of his decades of toil. And the web is still growing.

1. The Arqin mud volcano in Usu County; the magma erupts and solidifies covering the earth with a network of scars.
2. Zhao Cheng'an: a photographer in action
3. Underground water in Usu County







# A WORLD OF STRIKING CONTRASTS

The land of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region is by and large occupied by the Tianshan, Kunlun and Altay mountains, and the Junggar and Tarim basins. This unique geological composition has created a host of striking contrasts – contrasts between rude barbarity and refined elegance, between settled peace and unruly restlessness, and between soaring heights and unfathomable depths.

Evidence of this lies everywhere. For instance, the difference in height between Turpan, lying 156 metres below sea level, and the Qogir Peak, the world's second tallest peak at 8,611 metres, is unbeaten anywhere in the world.

The Gobi Desert is strewn with black pebbles, and one of the world's largest drifting deserts, the Taklimakan, continues to make inroads after gobbling up so many ancient towns and unfortunate wayfarers.

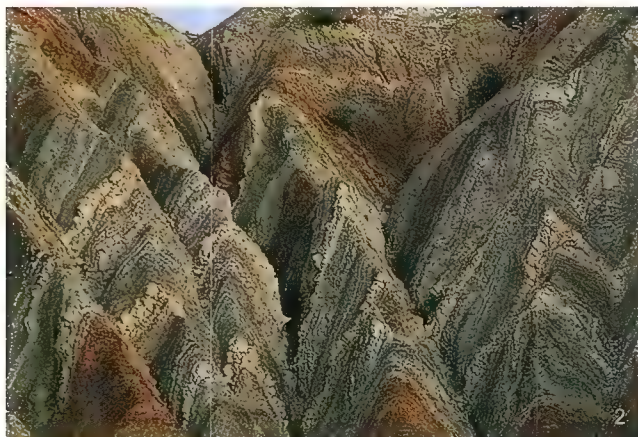
But right at its bosom a myriad of oases have survived, gleaming with rich verdure, and yielding bounteous crops of melons and fruit.

The Kunlun Mountains lie in stark nakedness, while the southern side of the Tianshan Mountain is blanketed with a dense forest containing hundreds of millions of dragon spruce (*Picea asperata*).

Qarkilik and Lop Nur, handicapped by a meagre annual precipitation of 10 mm, are synonymous with death, whereas rich rainfalls have shaped the Ertix River Valley in Burqin County into a karst

topography evocative of southern China.

Long years of high winds have turned Xinjiang's once flat land into a mass of platforms, isolated hills and earth pillars and prompted such exotic names as Ghost Town, Hundred-Dragon Mound and Dragon City; by contrast, the landscape of the Yili Valley, with ample rainfall and pleasant weather, presents an idyllic picture of captivating beauty.



Temperature is another example of striking contrast in Xinjiang. As the saying goes, "A mountain claims all four seasons at one time, and the weather changes at five-kilometre intervals". A visitor from Taiwan wrote, "I was indeed befuddled by the yawning difference in temperature in Xinjiang. Just consider this simple question: What should one wear on a day when the temperature soars from below zero to 40°C?"

This reminded me of a day when we were driving up the Uxilgin Mountain Pass, Xinjiang. We had just finished eating our lunch in short sleeves and perspiring profusely when, after reaching a height of 3,000 metres, we found ourselves shivering in a sleet storm which had already covered the mountain with snow.

In such a place one can shoot pictures of all four seasons on any given day.

1. The Altun Mountain
2. Exposed mountain rocks
3. Observed from the air, the northern end of the Tianshan Mountains assumes the image of a giant cabbage.

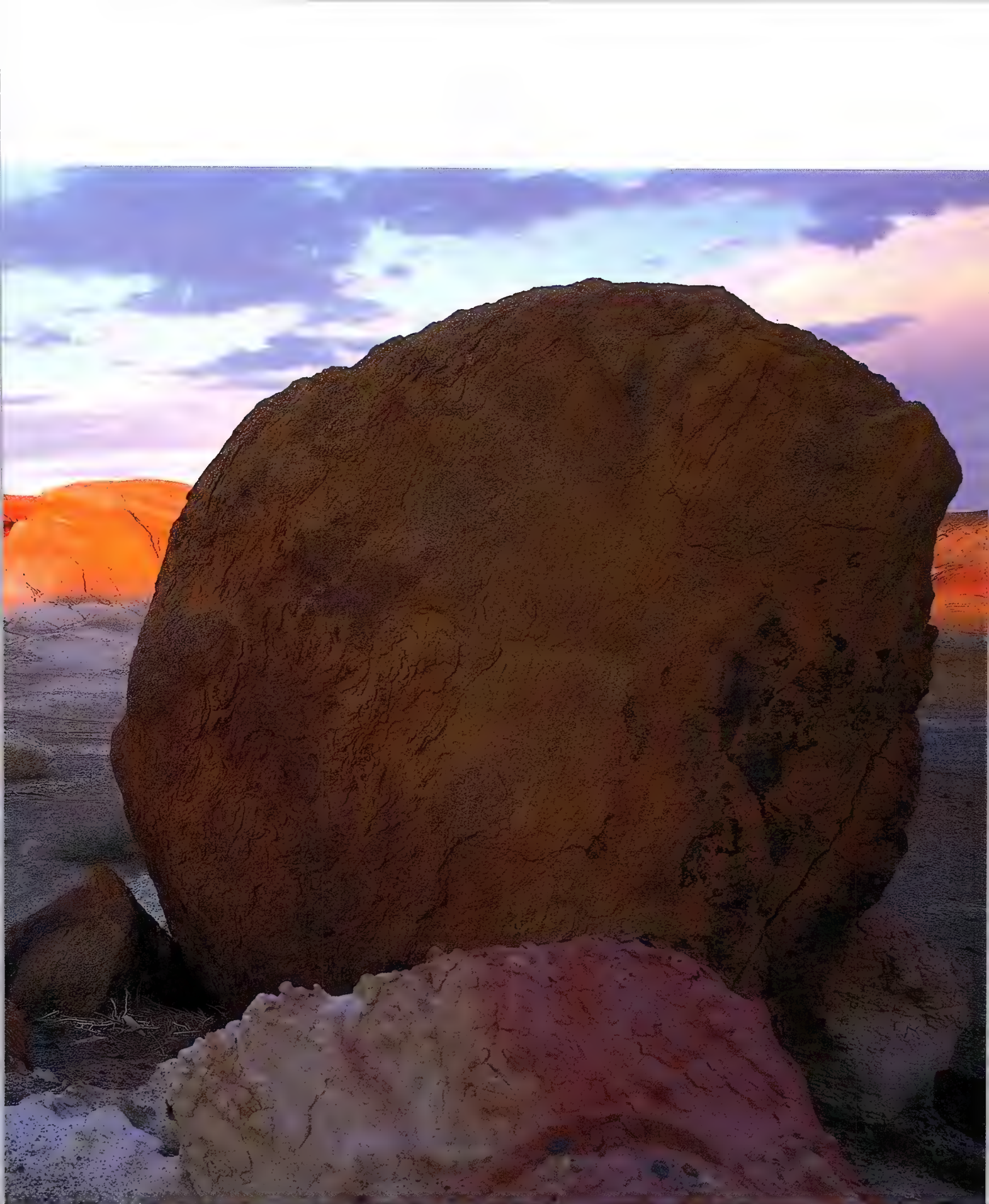












The Five-Colour Bay in the Junggar Basin



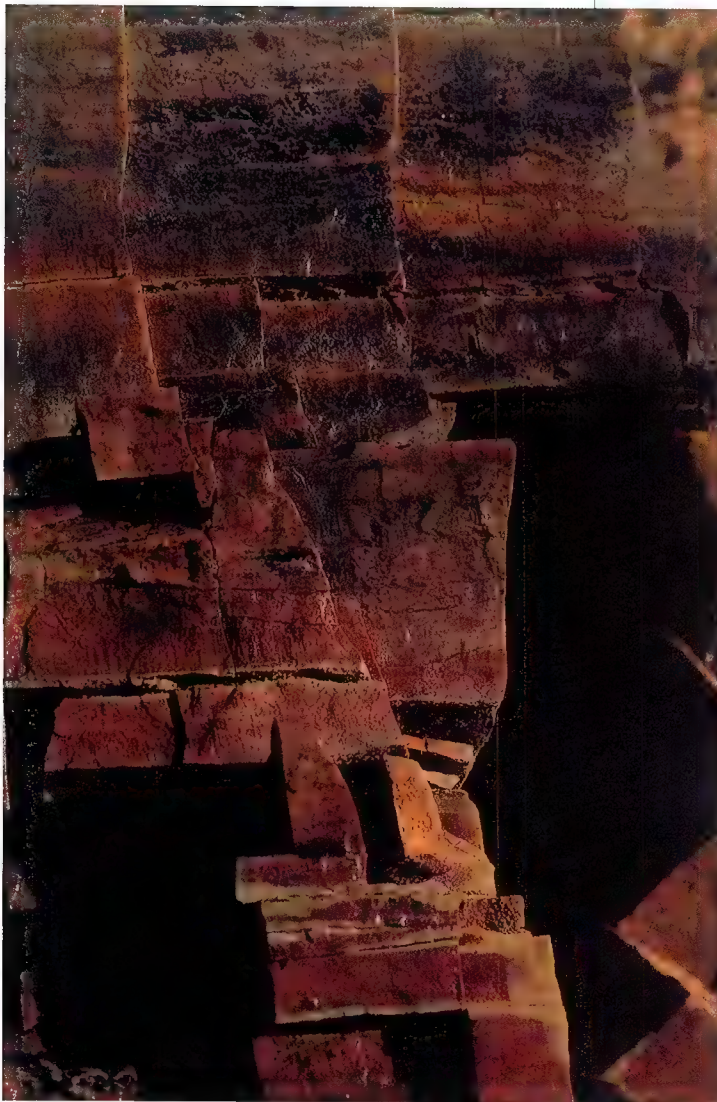


## MASTERPIECE OF NATURE

According to tectonic studies, the Himalayan Mountains miraculously rose from the Sea of Tethys several hundred million years ago as a result of a violent clash between the Indian and Eurasia plates. The force was so great that they reached a height of 8,000 metres, and the once choppy sea was transformed into rolling countryside. While extending northward, the mountains clashed with the Tarim and Hazakhstan plates, and as a result the Tianshan Mountain Range was formed, thus adding the final touch to the landscape of Xinjiang.

Having been working in Xinjiang for 40 years, I have the good fortune to enjoy the various masterpieces of Mother Nature.





### Solidified Wood

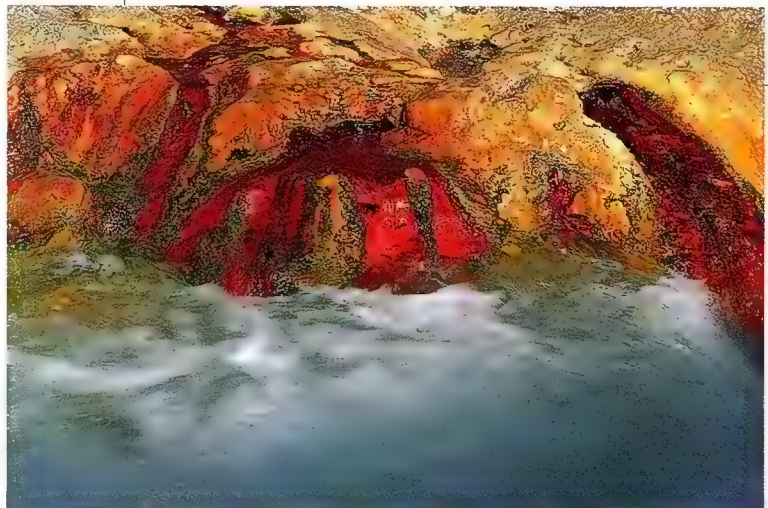
Solidified wood forests are a wonder of Xinjiang. Though similar discoveries have been made in the United States of America and other countries, the solidified trees in Xinjiang are unmatched in both scale, quantity and features. The solidified woods in the Gurbantunggut Desert and the Five-Coloured Bay date back 150 million years. In Jimsar I saw a one-kilometre-long solidified forest belt, but unfortunately it is crumbling into ruin due to human and natural factors. In Qitai County solidified trees with trunks so thick as to fill the span of three men's arms linked together are seen at the bottom of the gully, some standing upright, others lying higgledy-piggledy on the ground. In the Jiangjun Gobi Desert in east Junggar a large solidified tree trunk sits astride a gully to serve as a bridge.

### The Bleeding River

In south Xinjiang there are a number of rivers named after their colours. In the local ethnic language the Yarkant River means "Black River"; the Aksu River, "White River"; the Kizilsu River, "Red River". In the Tuoyun Mountain 4,000 metres above sea level, where the Kizilsu River rises, I saw crimson water flowing through it, as if the earth were bleeding. The phenomenon is attributable to the riverbed rocks covered with red minerals such as iron, manganese and mercury. This is similar to the Yellow Dragon River in Sichuan and the Yellowstone Park in the United States of America, but the difference is that the head of the Kizilsu River looks even more kaleidoscopic.

### Burning Mountains

Spontaneous combustion attributable to the Jurassic Period is spotted in several places in Xinjiang. At night, orange-red flames erupt from the black rocks, casting a deep red light upon rocks in the distance, looking as if a number of gigantic boulders of coal are burning themselves on the mountain slope. The beauty of the scenery is enhanced by minerals such as sulphur which have erupted from the combustion.







### Oil Spillage

My journey in Xinjiang was full of unexpected discoveries. Solidified oil spillage from rock seams in Karamay are reminiscent of clusters of black pearls. In Ulugqat County the wind has sculptured the spillage into a swarm of lifelike tadpoles. In Usu County, falling flower petals and leaves have combined with oil spillage to form into natural objects d'art. In a gully in Hutubi County, the oil constantly spills out of crevices in the rocks, thereby covering them with a shiny sheet of varnish.

### Sand Vegetation

A desert is an ocean of death. There, it is a simple case of survival of the fittest. Plants can survive only by constantly adapting themselves to the drought, high winds, and the high alkaline content of the sand; gradually a unique school of sand plants came to stay.

Most sand plants are low in stature and grow tiny flowers and leaves; some do not have leaves at all. Some grow xylary leaves to reduce evaporation. The most typical of sand plants is sacsaoul (*Haloxylon ammodendron*). Though with a height of only two metres, the sacsaoul has extended its roots as deep as three metres underground; it is green when there is plenty of water, and withers – but never dies – in a dry spell, and it can survive in temperatures of 80°C or -40°C. The high alkaline content in the Gobi Desert never affects the sacsaoul's growth, for it is itself very salty inside.

In these sand plants man has seen hope for his own survival in the desert. Quite a few nature reserves have been established in Xinjiang to protect these plants. The Ganjiahu Sacsaoul Reserve in west Junggar, for example, has become a 1,040-square-kilometre botanical garden of sand plants.







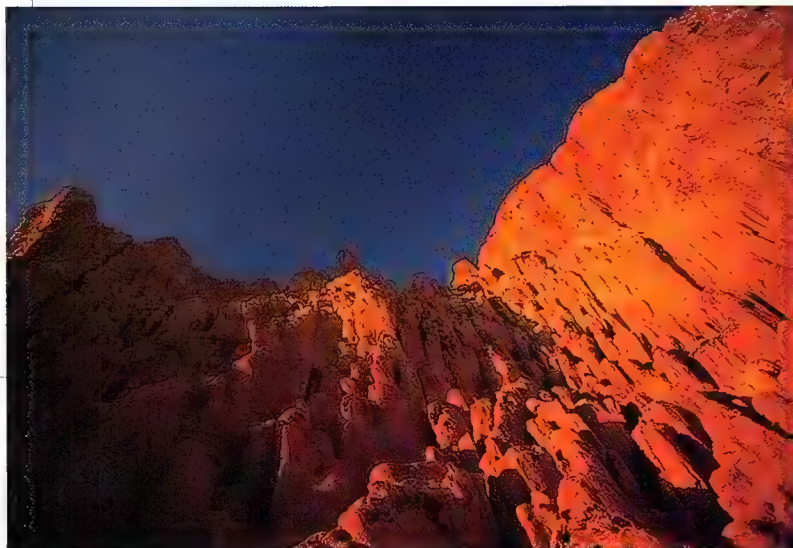
### Karst Topography

The Ludi Rock in Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, leaps to mind at the mere mention of karst topography resulting from erosion, which is believed to be a natural phenomenon peculiar to rainy limestone areas in the south.

That is why I was rather puzzled when I spotted similar eluvial sights along the Ertix River in Burqin County, Xinjiang. It turns out that the annual precipitation in this area runs at an impressive 1,000 mm, which is rare in the generally arid Xinjiang, and that the local mud-rock formation is susceptible to mountain runoffs. The result has been an eluvial landscape in exotic contours and colours.

### Mud Volcano

In Usu County, a cluster of mud volcanoes protrude from the horizon, with the snow-covered Tianshan Mountains looming high in the background. From a bird's-eye view these mud volcanoes look like an ocean of mud with a wrinkled surface. Once, looking down from the northern side of the Tianshan Mountains, I was thrilled to see the round purple-coloured mouth of a mud volcano on the mountain. Lying in the centre of a golden stretch of mud, it looked like a gigantic fried egg.







### Product of the Wind

Xinjiang, lying in the hinterland of the Asian continent and remote from the ocean, is an arid place ravaged all year round by the wind. One poet joked that in the region the wind comes only twice a year – each lasting for six months. Because of the savage wind, most places of Xinjiang are, by and large, unvisited by a single soul.

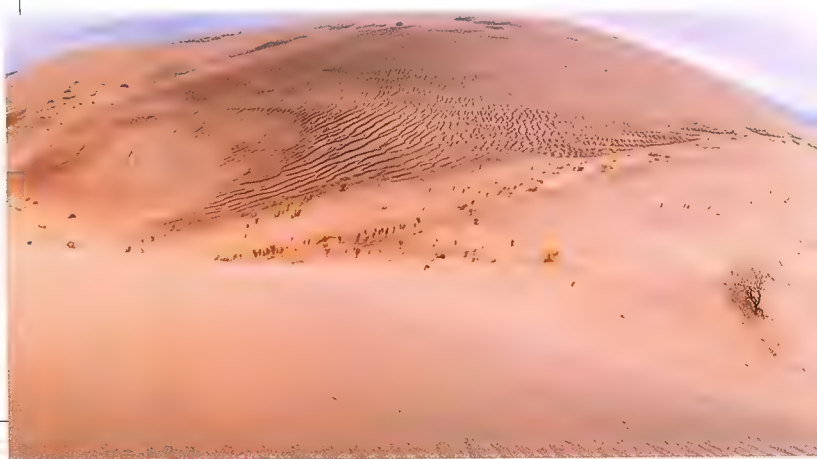
The wind, the killer of greenery and sower of the seeds of barrenness, is so strong that it can dissolve hard rocks into dust and whip them up into the sky. In Xinjiang, the wind has filled the Tarim Basin with 16.5 million cubic metres of sand and pebbles and turned it into the world's largest desert second only to the Sahara in Africa. Since remote antiquity the wind of Xinjiang has eradicated numerous kingdoms from the surface of the earth, and robbed man of the basic elements necessary for survival.

At a height of 3,000 metres up the Kunlun Mountains, I was horrified to discover that a new desert was emerging, and a constant stream of sand is encroaching upon even more land. Both the sunrise and the sunset are blurred by thick clouds of dust. At the edge of the basin, towns and farmlands are under the constant threat of the advancing yellow sand.

As a result many places in Xinjiang are named after the wind, such as Eighteen-Li Wind Zone in Dabancheng, and Old Wind Pass in Toli County.

### Rock Nodules

A multitude of rocks lie protruding from the ground in Xinjiang, and long years of wind have chiselled them into varying shapes. In the Gobi Desert in Qitai County, I saw two huge stones in the shape of a human head. In Jimsar, a rock nodule shows a cross section which resembles a freshly cut sandwich. By the cunning labour of nature, a gully in Karamay looks like a fairy tale world, with numerous rock nodules assuming a hundred and one images – new-born babies, tiny birds hunting for food, fashionable hats, and so on.





# TRAVELLERS' TIPS

## Route One (green line):

Ürümqi → Five-Colour Bay → Huoshao Mountain → Wild Horse Ground → Qitai → Ghost Town in Jiangjun Gobi Desert → Xinjing's largest forest of silicified trees → Humming Sand Dunes → Primitive Xinjiang poplar (*Populus diversifolia*) forest → Barkol → Santang Lake → Shanshan → Turpan → Ürümqi.

### The Scenery:

This route conducts to the Gurbantunggut Desert and Five-Coloured Bay in the depths of the Junggar Basin, then crosses the Huoshao Mountain to the Jiangjun Desert in east Junggar for a look at the celebrated mirages. The Ghost Town in Qitai is famed for its unusually thick silicified trees in a hundred and one poses and shapes – one of them sits astride a gully to serve as a bridge. The route continues into eastern Tianshan Mountains by way of Mori County. The exotic sights of the Barkol grassland with its high mountains and lakes are still not widely known to the outside world. In some places the tourists have to stay in overnight camps. The way back is clustered with scenery such as the Flaming Mountain, Grape Gully, and the ruins of the ancient Jiaohe City.

**Duration:** 15 Days

**Season:** May-November

## Route Two (blue line):

Ürümqi → Karamay → Burqin → Hom River → Hanas Lake → Kaba River → Beitun → Koktokay → Burning Mountain → Five-Colour Bay → Ürümqi.

### The Scenery:

After touring the Ghost Town the visitor enters the Altay Mountain area, now a national nature reserve where the primitive looks of the forests, lakes and rivers remain intact. The scenery of the Altay Mountain bears a resemblance to the Alps in Europe. With the improved transport conditions, the route can extend to other, so far, unvisited territories where the landscape is one of a kind. The roads on this route are generally bumpy and torturous, and form a challenge to vehicles and travellers alike.

**Duration:** 15 days.

**Season:** June-September. The scenery on this route looks its seasonal best in mid-September. In winter everything is obliterated by the snow. In and around December temperatures in the Altay Mountain are not so low, which makes winter travel possible.

## Route Three (red line):

Ürümqi → Korla → Ruoqiang → Mang'ai → Yaziban → Qimantag → Ayakkum → Aqqikkol → Qiemo → return to Ürümqi by plane.

### The Scenery:

This is a special route which covers the Altay Mountain, a national nature reserve of 4.5 million acres, more than 3,000 square kilometres of which are at an altitude of over 3,900 metres above sea level. The glaciers and snow-mantled peaks are known for their imposing magnitude. The nature reserve is home to tens of thousands of different kinds of wildlife, and the landscape is studded with deserts, lakes and springs, all preserved in their primitive form. The route, which conducts through a landscape typical of hinterland Asia, is rather challenging to both visitors and photographers.

For details please contact the Travel Service of Karamay. Telephone number: (0990) 223907. Fax number: (0990) 223822.

Note: For our readers' reference, we have chosen three routes from the eight Zhao Cheng'an has recommended. To those travellers thinking of travelling alone, we would stress that these routes are highly hazardous.

## 三條探索旅遊線路示意圖

### Sketch Map of the Three Tourist Routes





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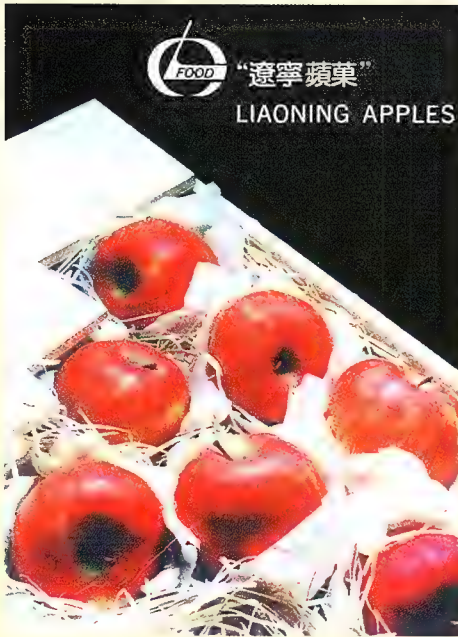


# 遼寧富德集團公司

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CITY PROFILE

# SHENZHEN – A CITY BUILT WITHIN 15 YEARS





**R**ome was not built in a day and neither was Shenzhen. Yet what the city has managed to achieve in slightly more than one and a half decades is no mean feat. Stepping out of the customs hall of Shenzhen, you are at once greeted by the buoyant atmosphere of the city. The jungle of glass and concrete is the first thing that dazzles you. It takes some time for your focus to adjust from the imposing modern skyscrapers towering over the city to the small streets crowded with a multicoloured number of shops and small stalls.

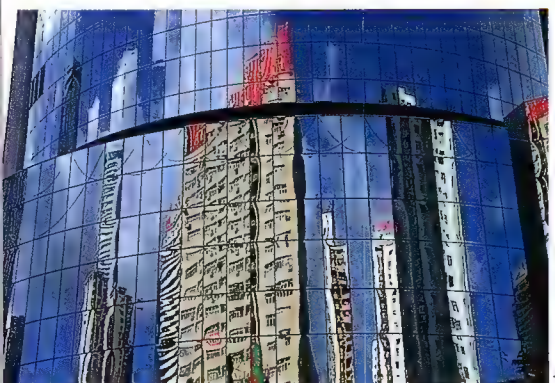
**C**rammed with citizens of different regional accents, an accelerated growth rate, money pouring, western fashion, and names are not difficult to spot as you weave through the traffic. When night comes, the city is brightly lit up by a string of coloured neon signs, and you're out in a world of both a wide choice of night life, all made possible by the presence of a socialist market economy, and a lively one. What Shenzhen does is in Argentina's words: "It's a dream of the future."

**T**he Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping's policy of reform and opening to the outside world is lived up to in Shenzhen, where a Special Economic Zone was set up in the 1980s. Since then, the city has been thriving well and stands as a shining example of modernisation for the rest of China.





# SHENZHEN – A MECCA FOR BELIEVERS IN A BETTER FUTURE



Catalysed by the birth of the special economic zone, the city's population has grown by several times to reach today's 3,000,000. From where has such a great number of people come? At present, the majority of the city's population is made up of young migrants in their 20s and 30s who came from all over the mainland. The average age of its citizens is 27.

Artists, entrepreneurs, young migrant workers congregate here from all over China. These soldiers of fortune, bohemian or conformist, roll back the otherwise dull and silent facade of the city by injecting their capital, talent and energy into it. Owing to their efforts, Shenzhen has become a dynamic emulator, rather than a dull copy, of Hong Kong. It takes courage and strength "to make it" in the competitive, fast-paced and pragmatic society.

In their quest for "a fast and big buck", the Shenzhen people know well the phrase: None but the brave deserves the lions share. In the city's economic development in the 80s, small stores and family owned factories began springing up like mushrooms. They were the avant-garde who answered the trumpet call for economic reform. Quite a number of them have now developed into enterprises of considerable size. Tales of rags-to-riches have become common-place. Large scale investments from foreign firms and overseas joint-ventures have been floating in. Export products, production of hi-tech goods and tertiary industry form the backbone of Shenzhen's economy. Among the enterprises now established, more than 6,000 are Chinese-foreign joint ventures, Chinese-foreign co-operatives or solely foreign owned. In addition, more than 5,000 are regionally funded enterprises and about 12,000 are city-owned. Building and light industries play a major role. Compared with 1987, 1992 saw the city's gross domestic product (GDP) grow 140 times, export values 510 times, and total industrial output value nearly 600 times. Companies from more than 30 countries and regions have established their enterprises here in one form or another. Most of the capital for foreign-funded projects comes

from the United States, Japan and the regions of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. Consortiums and multinationals have also set up their branches here. (source of data and figures: The Tourist Bureau of the Shenzhen People's Government). In its bid to draw more foreign investment, the Shenzhen government introduced a range of preferential policies in early 1993. Procedures for examination and

approval of foreign investment projects have since been further simplified.

Beside starting businesses that call for undaunted entrepreneurial spirit, investing in shares and bonds is just another way to make money. The first stock market in modern China was born in Shenzhen. Trading in shares and bonds has become so

popular that the buyers and sellers include even farmers, housewives and undergraduates. Monitoring the stock market has already become part of the daily routine of many Shenzhen people. Trends, growth patterns and performance of shares are closely followed by their straining eyes on charts and graphs. They know that a stock market is more than a place where you "try your luck and rake in a buck".

## Southern Outpost of China

Situated in the rapidly developing southern coast of Guangdong Province, with Hong Kong as its neighbour, Shenzhen's metropolitan outlook belies its long history. According to archaeological finds its origin can be traced far back to the New Stone Age (5-6 millenniums ago). When Emperor Qin Shihuang unified China, the Baiyu indigenous people of Shenzhen were brought under the central rule of the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.). Salt administrations were established here during the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.- A.D. 220). During the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420) and the Southern Dynasties (420-589), Shenzhen was in its heyday, and it had an important role to play in politics, economy, culture and communication, and commanded coastal defences. The Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1279) dynasties, the golden days of Chinese history, saw the area develop into a gateway for merchants plying the busy Silk Road on the Sea. The growing importance of Shenzhen in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) is fully reflected as such by an account in the Records of the Renovation of Tianhou Temple at Chiwan: "Crews on all ships bound for Southeast Asia stopped at Tianhou Temple here to pray before setting sail, numerous foreign ships stopped by to get provisioned." Nantou governor's brigades and sea patrols were also garrisoned here. Since then the scale of the port kept growing right through the Yuan (1271-1368) and Ming dynasties into a large military defence network covering Nantou, Dongguan, and Dapeng to keep Japanese pirates, raiders and foreign invaders at bay. In 1521, an invading Portuguese





fleet was defeated by the Nantou army and inhabitants under the leadership of the Guangdong Admiral Wang Hong. In 1573, Dongguan County was replaced by Xin'an County (today's Bao'an). Today's Shenzhen City and Hong Kong were brought under its jurisdiction.

During the years of Emperor Jiaqing (r.1796-1820) in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the population of Xin'an County had grown to 225,979. Agriculture, fishery and salt manufacture were the mainstay of the county's economy.

In 1840, the Opium War broke out and Shenzhen was the first to come under the British attack. Led by Lai Enjue, the army and people of Xin'an fought bravely and kept the British invaders at bay.

In the Chinese democratic revolutions and World War II, the people of Shenzhen shed blood in their undaunted fight against imperialists, Japanese militarists and expansionists. The Dongjiang partisans are still well remembered for their persistent and damaging

guerrilla attacks on the Japanese invaders around Huizhou, Dongguan and Bao'an.

Since the 1980s, the 2,020-square-kilometre city of Shenzhen has once again taken up the role of an outpost, this time as a pioneer in China's economic development, by embracing market economy. Many Hong Kong businessmen have swarmed across the border into the city and have set up their businesses here. Travelling to and fro between Hong Kong and Shenzhen, they spread and share information with their Shenzhen counterparts like bees among flowers. Filing through the customs at the border are ranks of trucks and lorries transporting goods and cargoes between the two cities. Radio and television broadcasts from Hong Kong are widely and easily received here — the ties between Shenzhen and Hong Kong at all levels get firmer and firmer. Shenzhen has become the window on China who is striving forward for modernisation.



**Previous page: The vision of a socialist market economy comes true. (by Guo Mei)**

**Previous page (insert): Deng: On your mark! This is the right direction.**

1. The jungle of concrete and glass reflected in a glittering glass wall (by Guo Mei)
2. More than a place to "try your luck and rake in a buck": a dealer in trusts and bonds (by Peng Zhenge)
3. "Arteries" leaving the heart of Shenzhen (by Shi Baoxiu)
4. The Shenzhen Railway Station (by Huang Yanhong)





## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



In its bid to boost tourism, the Shenzhen government has channelled investments into building and upgrading its tourist spots and facilities. Taking either a westerly or easterly routes, you are guaranteed to see and enjoy many.

### West Route

#### Splendid China Miniature Scenic Spot

If you are in a hurry and yet ambitious enough to want to see the whole of China in a day, Splendid China Miniature Scenic Spot is the answer. The 30-hectare place holds the largest number of miniature scenes – nearly 100 famous scenic spots of China. The scenes are situated according to their actual geographical positions.

#### China Folk Culture Villages

At the mention of “culture”, you should reach for your camera if you are interested in Chinese folk culture. Here is a golden chance to capture the colourful folk arts, customs and residences of 21 of China’s ethnic groups on camera without touring the whole of China. In the 24 villages built to house the ethnic peoples, you can enjoy, or take part in, the ethnic songs and dances. The performers are all dressed in traditional costume. Ethnic foods are served and ethnic artefacts and crafts are on sale. In the evening, parades by the ethnic groups are staged.

#### Window of the World

Neighbouring the Splendid China Scenic Spots and the China Folk Culture Villages, the Window of the World houses replicas to actual scale of 118 historical sites, tourists spots, magnificent landscapes, folk residences from all over the world. In an area of 48 hectares, the displays are grouped under nine sections: the World Square, Asian Area, Oceania Area, European Area, African Area, American Area, Recreation Centre of Modern Science and Technology, the World

Sculptures Gallery and the International Street. You will also see folk art performances at the “Carnival Night” held in evening.

#### Safari Park

Built on the banks of Xili Lake, the 120-hectare Safari Park is home to approximately 3000 animals of 150 species from all over the world. Everyday an animal parade is arranged with elephants in the lead followed by tigers and lions.

#### The Green World

If you want to have a break from the city life, The Green World is the ideal place for your rendezvous with nature. Located at Shekou, the place offers you green scenery to see and fresh fruits to taste. You can also try your hand at pottery at the pottery workshop here. Contact of the forth kind with dinosaurs and other prehistoric beasts (all wax sculptures) at Dinosaur Habitat is a must for fans of Jurassic Park. Log cabins and villas are let to visitors who want to spend some days in the forest. Alternatively you can camp here by renting tents.

#### Golf Club

Lying to the south of Xiangmi Lake, the 27-hole international golf course is designed by world renowned golf player, Mr. Isao Aoki. The first China International Golf Championship was held here. In addition to the golf course, one can find tennis courts, a swimming pool and a hotel.

#### Mission Hills Golf Club

The first golf club in China accepted by the International Players Association, its golf course is the first one in China recognised by the PGA Tour. The club occupies an area of 2.8 hectares at Guanlan Town and is reputed to be one of the largest clubs in the world. The club also offers restaurants, gymnasiums, billiard rooms, hot spring baths, sauna, tennis courts, badminton courts and an indoor two-storey golf practising course as part of its facilities.

#### Bao Ri Golf Tourist Company Ltd

The company is situated near Huangtian Airport in Bao’an District of Shenzhen and has an international standard 18-hole golf course.





### Shekou Tourist Area

**Shekou Sea World** The amusement centre is converted from a retired 10,000-ton luxury ocean liner S. Minghua built in France and renovated in 1983. The ship has 253 rooms, Chinese and Western restaurants, an English bar, Bamboo Grove Bar, dance hall, swimming pool, health centre, children's recreation centre and the China Folk Customs Exhibition Centre.

**Tomb of the Last Song-Dynasty Emperor** Built in memory of the last emperor Zhao Bing of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) in 1911, it is the burial site of the emperor's belongings. In 1279, pursued by the Mongolian army, the ministers Lu Xiufu, Zhang Shijie and Wen Tianxiang (the Three Heroes of the Late Song Dynasty) escorted the young emperor to flee to Yashan of Xinhui in Guangdong Province. Later, realising that he could not save the situation, Lu Xifu carried the young emperor on his back and jumped into the sea to die martyrs. A monk at Chiwan of Nantou in Xin'an County (today's Shenzhen) found the emperor's body and buried it here. Later, the body was moved to the emperor's hometown by a member of the Zhao family.

**Chiwan Fortresses** Two fortresses were built at Chiwan in the reign of Emperor Kangxi (1662-1722) in the Qing Dynasty. Each one was equipped with six guns made of cast iron and manned by 20 soldiers.

They played important roles in the Opium War. A giant bronze statue of the imperial Commissioner Lin Zexu and the Sea-View Pavilion were erected at the site.



### East Route

#### Xianhu Botanical Park

The park houses 1,500 species of wild plants, 400 species of tropical plants and 140 species of plants which are on the verge of extinction. It is built in the classical garden-style.

#### Greater Meisha Golden Beach

Fine sands and clear water await you at the beach which faces Dapeng Bay and Daya Bay. The beach lies between Yantian Harbour and Lesser Meisha Beach, and is 30 minutes' drive from the centre of town. Also at the beach is a recreation centre where you can enjoy yourselves in an outdoor dance court, a barbecue yard and a seashore holiday inn. You can also ride a horse along the beach or hire a motorboat. For those dreaming of the Wild West, "Gun City" is the place to go where you can live out simulated warfare with air-guns.

#### Lesser Meisha Beach

At Dapeng Bay, the beach lies about 30 kilometres from the centre of town. You can sun-bathe, swim, water-ski or drive motorboats.

The Xiaomeisha Hotel and Tingtao Guest House by the sea have 270 rooms, five Chinese and Western restaurants and health and fitness facilities.

#### Nan'ao

Restaurants at Nan'ao are the best places to feast on seafood at Dapeng Bay. You can also hire a motorboat to tour around the nearby islets. The traditions of fishing villages are still observed here: Fishing Lantern Festival is still celebrated and Marriage on the Sea is still practised.

#### Dapeng Ancient Fortress

The fortress was built on the Dapeng Peninsula in 1394. Its west, south and east gates, and parts of its wall, still stand. Wells, temples and residences of the Qing Dynasty are well preserved and have been classified as cultural relics under state protection.

#### The Hakka Village at Pingshan

A walled village typical of Hakka architecture can be found at the south-west of Pingshan Country Fair in Pingshan Town. Built in the reign of Qing Emperor Qianlong (1736-1795), it occupies 1.5 hectares



of land in the shape of a square. Gun towers were built at the corners of the wall. Lying before the main gate of the walled village are the threshing grounds and a pond in the shape of a crescent. Folk customs are still preserved. A visit here can help you learn more about the history of the Hakka people.

#### Donghu Lake

3 kilometres north-east of the town, Donghu (East Lake) is also named Shenzhen Reservoir and supplies water to both Shenzhen and

1. Russian dance in the "Carnival Night" at the Window of the World
2. Relaxing at a holiday resort (by Guo Mei)
3. One more stroke: a golf player calculating his shot (by Huang Jianmin)
4. A town at the miniature scenery park Splendid China



## FOR YOUR REFERENCE

Hong Kong. Red Chamber, Eight-Character Pavilion, Laole Pavilion and an exhibition hall built here enhance its attraction. A restaurant and East Lake Hotel cater for visitors.

### Dongfang Shenqu (Eastern Myths) Recreation Centre

30 scenes based on the China's myths and religions are displayed in six areas. Films are shown on a water screen formed by 36,000 water columns in the Dragon Palace; the longest panoramic painting in the world is displayed in the Heavenly Hall; 500 statues of Buddha and arhats in various poses are housed in the Lingshan Temple; and Hell is mottled with demon lairs. All of them vividly recount the Chinese folklore.

In the Nightly Square are restaurants and village-style shops. Classic and modern dances are also performed.

### Celestial Douhuacun Restaurants

Neighbouring Donghu Park and Dongfang Shenqu Recreation Centre are ancient Chinese-style restaurants specialising in Sichuan cuisine and snacks from different regions all over China. Traditional dances and operas are performed in the evening.

### Festival

From 28 June to 8 July, Litchi Festival is celebrated in Shenzhen. A series of festival activities are held on the theme of promoting the city



and its ties with those from all over the world who are engaged in the development of the city in all fields.

1. Bridge over quiet water, China Folk Culture Villages
2. The hotel industry is booming. All tastes are catered for.  
(by Peng Zheng)

### Customs

Following the 72-Hour Visa Exemption for foreign tourists which was introduced since 18 months ago, the Shenzhen Municipal Government has further simplified the Custom formalities: From 1 July 1996, tourists visiting Shenzhen in a foreign tour group are not required to fill in the exit card if they enter and leave Shenzhen in whole groups.

### Transport

**Air** Shenzhen Airport, 32 km from Shenzhen City, is located at the west side of Guangzhou-Shenzhen Highway, Fuyong Town, Bao'an District, the east bank of the estuary of Pearl River. It can be reached by buses No. 501, 502 and 505. Buses to Guangzhou also stop at the airport. The east end of the airport can be reached by the Shenzhen-Guangzhou-Zhuhai Highway. Alternatively, you can get there by sea. Hydrofoils run between the north end of the airport and Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Macau and Zhongshan.

46 domestic routes serve major cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Kunming, Urümqi, Chongqing, Changsha, Guiyang, Xi'an, etc.

**Train** It is easy to reach Shenzhen from Hong Kong via the Kowloon-Canton Railway (KCR). In the mainland, 21 trains run between Shenzhen and Guangzhou everyday. Such cities as Shaoguan, Zhaoqing, Changsha, Maoming, etc. can also be reached by train from Shenzhen.

**Bus** Buses shuttle through all the tourist spots within the city. Mini-bus networks connect the city proper and its neighbouring scenic spots in the suburbs and outskirts. There are also long distance mini-buses running between Shenzhen and its neighbouring major cities: the fare for Guangzhou is 50 to 60 yuan for a single journey.

### Accommodation

Hotel industry has been flourishing in the past decade. It is easy to find accommodation catering to all tastes. A few are recommended as follows:

**Nan Hai Hotel** ☆☆☆☆ Add: Shekou Industrial District • Tel: 6692888 • Fax: 6692440 **Shangri-La Hotel** ☆☆☆☆ Add: East side, railway station, Jianshe Road, (38km from airport, near to railway station) • Tel: 2330888 • Fax: 2339878 **Shenzhen Bay Hotel** ☆☆☆ Add: Overseas Chinese Town • Tel: 6600111 • Fax: 6600139 **Century Plaza Hotel** ☆☆☆ Add: Jianshe Road (40km from airport, 0.5km from railway station) • Tel: 2320888 • Fax: 2334060 **Forum Hotel Shenzhen** (To be rated) Add: 67 Heping Road • Tel: 5586333 • Fax: 5561700 **Bamboo Garden** ☆☆☆ Add: 29 Dongmen Road North (25km from airport, 3km from railway station) • Tel: 5533138 • Fax: 5534835 **City Hotel** ☆☆☆ Add: 2 Wenjin Road Central (35km from airport, 5km railway station) • Tel: 2257000 • Fax: 2222765 **Far East Grand Hotel** ☆☆☆ Add: 104 Shennan Road East (32km from airport, 2km from railway station) • Tel: 2205369 • Fax: 2200239 **Golden**



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- Route D: Window of the World, Dongguan, Mt. Guanyin, Zhuhai
- Route E: Shenzhen Museum, The Green World, Window of the World
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- Route G: Window of the World, Splendid China Scenic Spots, China Folk Culture Village, The Green World

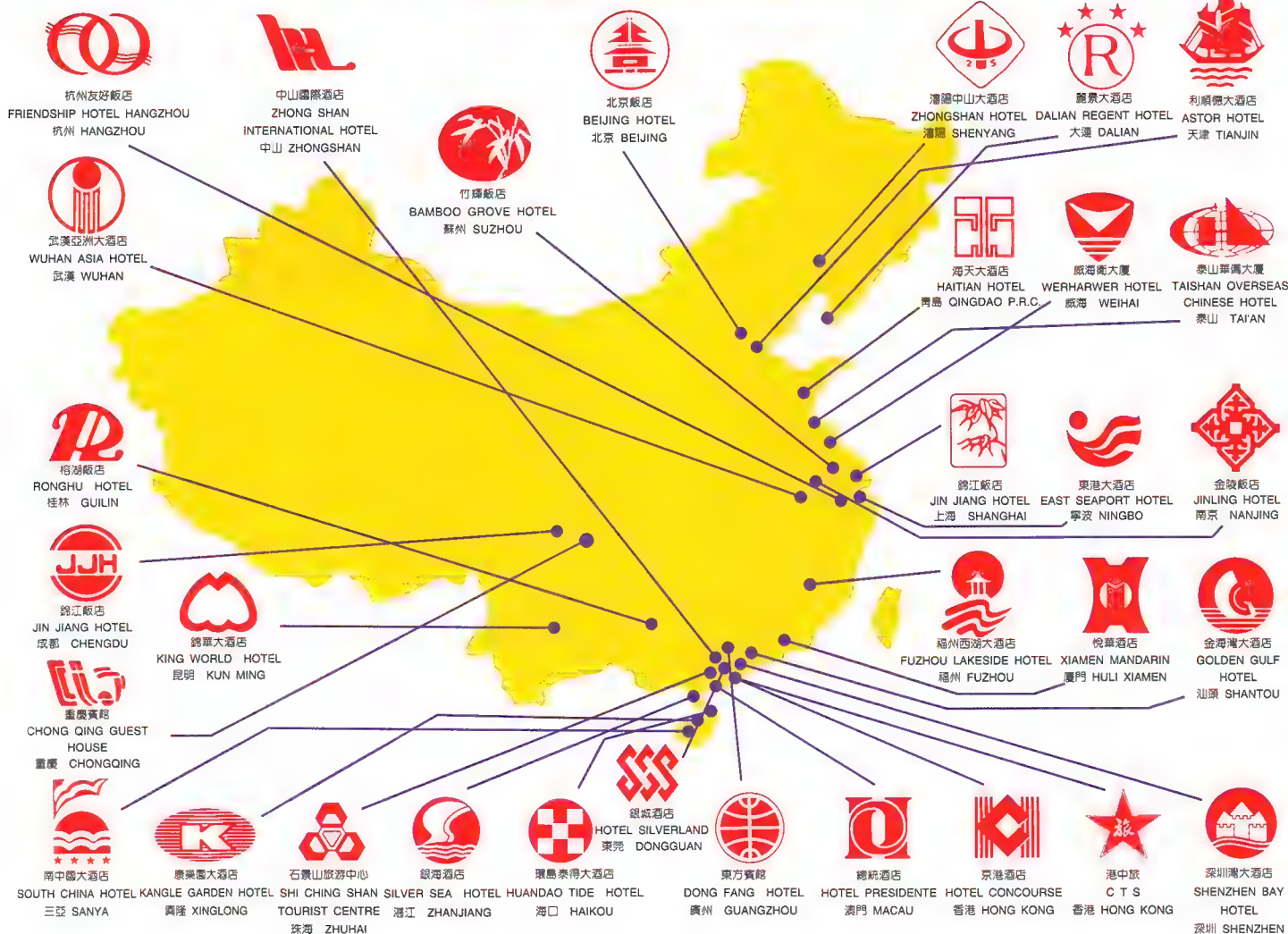
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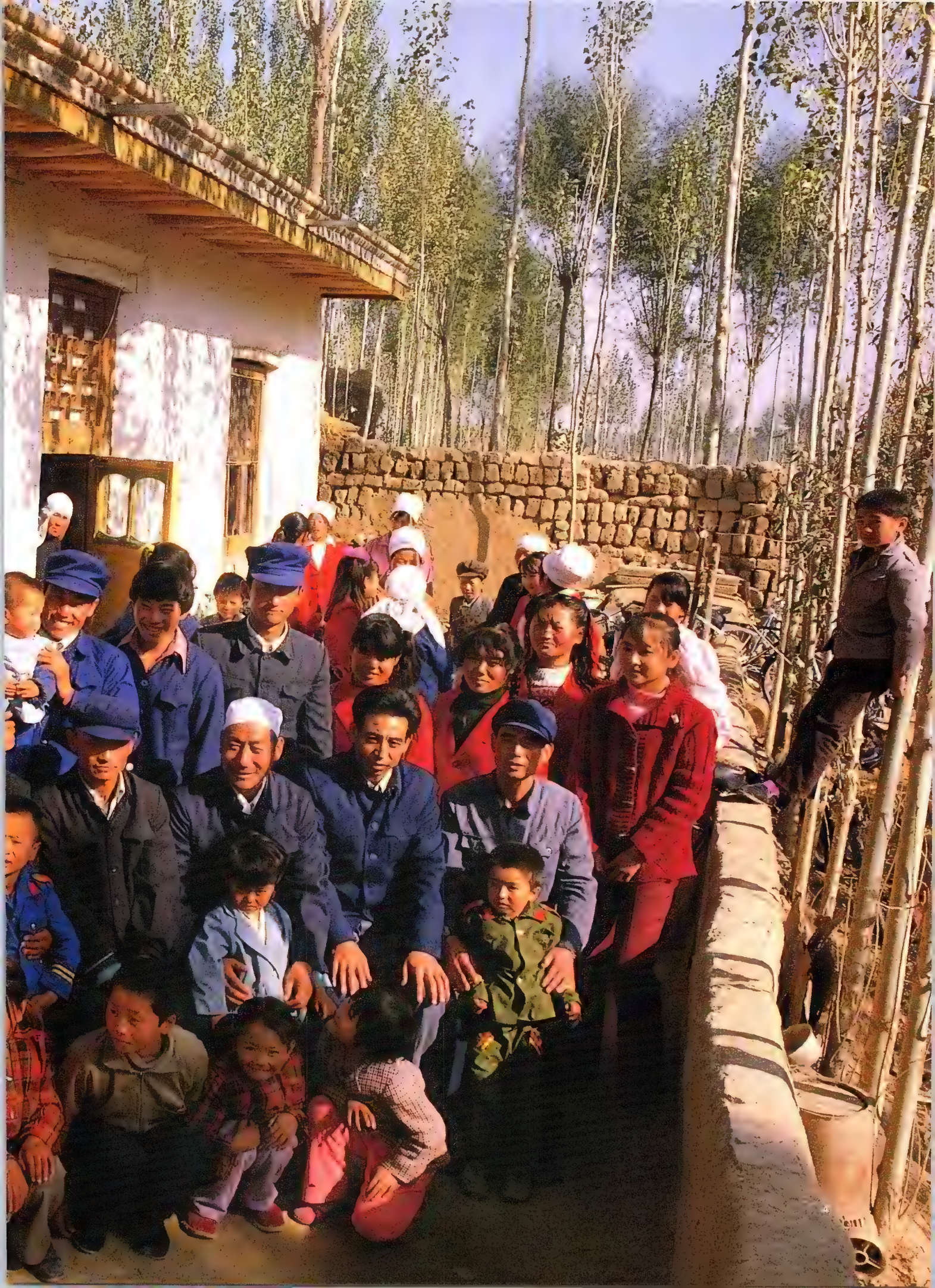
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# PEOPLES HUI - THE CHINESE MUSLIMS

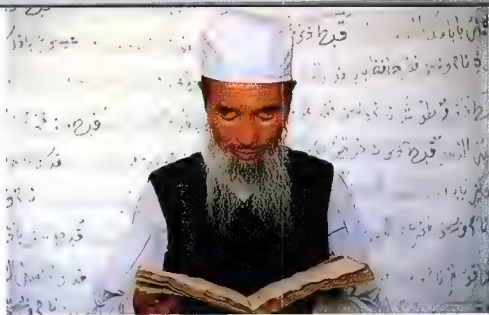
1. The interior of a mosque, Ningxia (by Wang Zheng)
2. Selling sheepskins (by Tai Chi Yin)
3. Islamic newly weds, Gansu (by Chapmen Lee)
4. Hui villagers in southern Ningxia (by Tang Zhiguang)











*The Hui are a minority people whose ancestors were Persians, Arabs, Mongols, Uygurs and Hans, and once congregated along the ancient Silk Road. Today, the Hui population are one of China's largest ethnic minorities, and have spread to all parts of the country. In addition to the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, numerous autonomous prefectures and counties have been founded in other provinces where the Chinese Muslims live in compact communities. Through self-government, the Huis manage to handle their own religious affairs and retain their unique customs.*



The Hui ethnic group has one of the largest minority populations in China. Statistics taken in mid-1990 show that their number then was about 8.6 million. It also is the most widely distributed group among all China's minorities. Except the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Hui communities are also found in Gansu, Qinghai, Henan, Hebei, Shandong, Yunnan and Xinjiang, as well as most cities and counties throughout the country.

Their most important festivals are the Festival of Fast-breaking and Corban. Marriage ceremonies are held by religious leaders called imams.

"Hui" is an abbreviated term for "Huihui" which first appeared as an ethnic group in the records of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127). The Huihui nationality was formed by the peoples coming from central Asia, mainly the Persians and Arabs, at the beginning of the 13th Century, who eventually mixed with the Hans, the Mongols, the Uygurs and other peoples.

During the periods of the Yuan Dynasty the Hui community began to develop. By the Ming Dynasty, the Huis had formed a nationality

which lived mainly in Guanzhong (Shaanxi), Hezhou (Gansu), and Lingzhou (Ningxia). Then, as the Silk Road on the Sea opened, the Huis began to live along the coast. The Qingjing Mosque in Quanzhou of Fujian Province is one of the earliest Islamic mosques in China. Since the Huis have lived together with the Hans for a long time, their current day language is based on the Han Chinese but mixed with some Arabic and Persian words.

Today, besides the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Regions which was founded in the 1950s, there are also Hui autonomous prefectures and counties, such as Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu, Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture in Xinjiang, Zhangjiazhuang and five other Hui autonomous counties. There are more autonomous counties where the Huis live together with other minority ethnic groups. In some places where the Huis live in compact communities Hui primary and secondary schools have been set up, some are boarding schools.

**Beliefs:** Most of the Huis are Islamic. The Hui people were greatly influenced by the religion of the Arabs and thus became converted to Islam. The religion grew and developed along with the Hui nationality and as the population dispersed widely throughout the country, their religion and customs were noticed and accepted by other peoples. From official documents to private writings, Islamism was regarded as the religion of the Huis, so that by the Ming Dynasty Islamism was called the "Huihui Religion" or Hui religion. However,



1. A devout Hui Muslim saying his prayers, Gansu (by Sun Chengyi)
2. Cleaning before praying at a mosque, Ningxia (by Tai Chi Yin)
3. Hui children in Gansu learning Arabic (by Chapman Lee)
4. A mosque at Naqianhu Village, Ningxia (by Tai Chi Yin)
5. The Islamic-style bas-relief on the door-frame of the mosque at Quanzhou, Fujian (by Chen Yit Nian)





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since people now recognise that Islamism is widely believed by other nationalities such as the Uyghurs, it is seldom called the "Hui Religion".

**Religious services:** Believers pray five times a day, and attend religious services each Friday afternoon when men worship in the mosques. Each year there are two ceremonies – the Festival of Fast-breaking and Corban. Services are held every night during the Fasting Month. Before each service, worshippers must take a shower to clean away their sins and confess to Allah.

**Food:** The most famous traditional dish is the "Whole Lamb Banquet", which was served by the Qing imperial court for Muslim officials and has enjoyed a history of more than 200 years. The "Whole Lamb Banquet" contains as many as 44 different lamb dishes served either hot or cold. The banquet offered by the emperor had even more – 76 lamb dishes. "Mutton Hotpot" is another delicacy. The thinly sliced pieces of lamb are dipped in boiling water and eaten. In addition, there are

other Hui delicacies such as "Fried Dough", "Eight-treasure Tea" and "Ox Skin Soup", a speciality of the Huis in Anhui.

**Clothing and decoration:** Women wear head-dresses in strict accordance to their age. For instance, newly-wedded women wear green, middle-aged women black, and the old white. Men mostly wear white rimless caps, except religious personnel and prestigious old men. This is mainly for convenience. As Muslims pray with their foreheads and noses touching the ground, it is therefore more convenient to wear rimless caps. So the cap is also called the "prayer cap". The styles of head-dress vary according to regions and customs. In addition, the Hui men like to wear white or black Chinese-style coats buttoned at the front, and old women like blue or black cloth robes. In fact, they are not much different from the Han Chinese in clothing.

**Residence:** The houses of the Hui vary from region to region. The Huis in Ningxia used to live in flat-roof earthen houses. However, many Hui families have now built new brick



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and tile houses. The Hui in Qinghai mostly live in courtyard houses. Because of the cold weather, the houses are built with heating brick beds. The houses of the Hui in Gansu are mostly brick and wooden structures with two to three rooms. Islamic families do not enshrine religious statues on tables nor hang images on the wall, but they like to hang paintings or calligraphy. This indicates that they are not idolatrous.

**Marriage customs:** Although the marriage customs of the Hui people vary slightly in various regions, usually the bridegroom takes part in a ceremony held at the home of the bride either on the day of marriage or the day before. The ceremony, presided by an imam, is very simple. First the imam reads some chapters from the Koran and the bridegroom has to answer the testimony of the imam before he is able to marry his bride. Before leaving her parents, the bride has to cry. Even if she is happy, she still has to squeeze some tears from her eyes, otherwise people will laugh at her. When the sedan chair arrives at the home of the bridegroom, the bride's uncle on her mother's side wraps her in a red blanket and carries her into the bridal chamber, but the bridegroom's relatives deliberately block the way, not letting the bride enter. If the bride falls over during the scuffle, the bride's family will be laughed at.

The Hui marriage customs of northern

Ningxia are also interesting. There is a tradition of "making fun of the bride's parents-in-law". The father-in-law's face is painted black, while the mother-in-law's face is painted with dots. Then, the father has to lead a donkey through town while the people try to beat the donkey in fun. It is said that this game originates from ancient times to test the temper of the parents-in-law so that the bride would know how well she would adapt to her new family.

**Festivals:** In addition to the Han festivals, the Hui have their own, such as the "Festival of Fast-Breaking" which falls on the first day of the tenth month in the Islamic calendar. The month before the festival is called Ramadan. During that month, believers do not eat any food or drink during daylight, no matter how hungry they are. The atmosphere during the month is solemn. People resume eating in the evening. At the end of the fasting month is the "Festival of Fast-Breaking". On the morning of the day, people gather in the mosques for a service and celebrate the festival, and the men usually start visiting relatives and friends.

The Corban is a traditional festival of the Hui people. Before the festival, families clean their house and on the day the whole family takes a bath and prays. The more affluent families kill a lamb to entertain visiting guests. Some Muslims gather in mosques where a



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1. Cutting beef fat
2. A food stall, Ningxia
3. A Hui bridegroom and his best man, Qinghai (by Zheng Yunfeng)
4. An Islamic architecture in Yinchuan, Ningxia (by Tai Chi Yin)
5. The spectacular mass prayer of the Muslims in Xining, Qinghai (by Wang Dajun)
6. Brick carving, Linxia, Gansu (by Zheng Yunfeng)





festival service is held in the mosque's big hall. They then watch animals being slaughtered – some bring along their oxen or sheep to be killed after a service.

**Taboo:** In the 7th Century, Mohammed created Islamism and, following the customs of the Arabs, he included in the Koran abstention from eating pork in the name of Allah. In addition,

the religion also forbids the eating of blood and animals which die by themselves. Most Hui people do not drink, so banquets are usually held without serving wine.



*Article by Huang Yanhong*

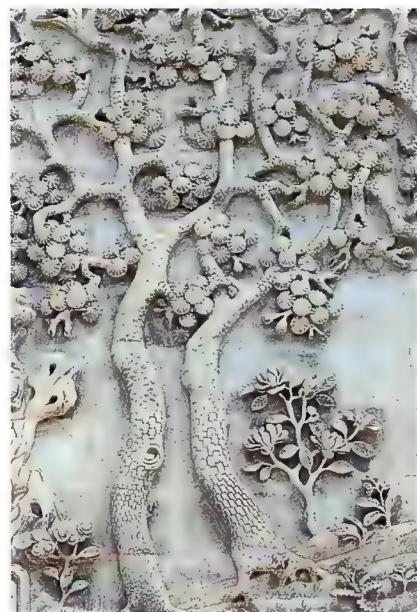
*Translated by M.Q.*

## TIPS FOR TRAVELLING IN A HUI AREA

If you are interested in experiencing the customs of the Hui people at first hand, the best place to visit is Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region where the Hui population accounts for one third of the region's total. There is a county called Jingyuan County whose Hui population makes up 97% of the total. This is one of the few counties in China where the residents are nearly all Huis. There are more than 2,000 mosques in Ningxia, among which are the Zhongda Mosque of Yinchuan, the Qingzhen Mosque of Tongxin and the Shanming Mosque of Xiji. All are very unique.

To get there fly to Yinchuan, the capital of Ningxia, and then take the bus to either Tongxin or Jingyuan, 220 km and 400 km away respectively.

In addition, there are compact communities of the Hui people in Beijing, Xi'an, Quanzhou and other cities.



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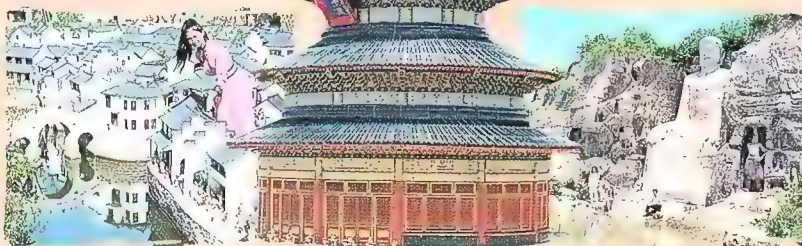
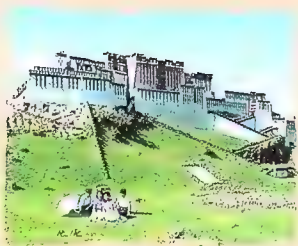


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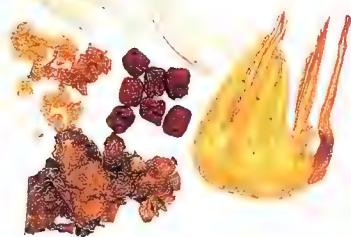
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## RESTAURANT FAMOUS FOR



## FOOD

The Tongrentang Imperial Cuisine Palace in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province, was China's first health food restaurant. Opened in 1980 it prepares its dishes based on the knowledge and research of a pharmacy in Beijing called Tongrentang, a Chinese herb shop with a history of 100 years.

The extensive menu lists over 1,000 healthy delicacies ranging from main course dishes to soups, pastries and drinks.

There is an old Chinese saying which goes: "What tastes bitter in the mouth is good for the health." Therefore, it is no mean feat to transform herbal ingredients into a welcoming, tasty dish fit for the dining table.

Guangdong and Jiangsu.

From a menu at Tongrentang Imperial Cuisine Palace, the diner can not only find out the name and price of the dish but also its beneficial effects. For example, a five-yuan pastry containing walnuts helps to invigorate the kidneys and the blood circulation system; a dish costing 80 yuan with prawns and golden

asters has the effect of nourishing one's inner strength and improving the kidneys; a 12-yuan dish of bark of

*eucommia* with sliced pigs kidneys can

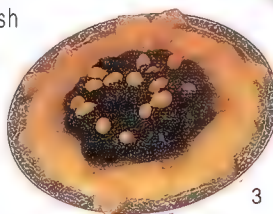
strengthen muscles and bones; a 68-yuan dish of steamed chicken with Chinese angelica can strengthen one's body by nourishing the blood; a dish containing loquat with frog

stomach, and dumplings with *Poria cocos* can cure diseases caused by dampness.... The restaurant also serves steamed dumplings cooked with the secret recipe once used for Empress Cixi's favourite cakes.

The set menus make the choosing from the vast selection easier. The nutrition-conscious cooks group together dishes to



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create an ideal balance of food and herbal medicines.

Every set of dishes is a complete prescription for improving the general health of the diner.

The restaurant is located at 1 Zongfu Street, Chengdu, Sichuan Province. It has become so well known in Chengdu that the interested diner simply has to tell the taxi driver the name of the restaurant to be taken straight there.

G

Photosx & Article by Huang Yanhong

Translated by F. Huang



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However, the master cooks at Tongrentang have succeeded. It has also trained several hundred health food cooks from more than a dozen countries and regions in Asia, including Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Their preparation skills employ elements from each of the major cooking schools from regions such as Sichuan,

1. The main dining hall of the Imperial Cuisine Palace
2. Five-Flavour crab
3. Broccoli cooked with ginkgo
4. Soft-shelled turtle cooked with ginseng and dwarf lily tubers



# UNIQUE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF THE UYGUR PEOPLE

Xinjiang has been known as the home of song and dance, and their music is probably the liveliest in China. The fame could not have been achieved without the accompaniment of exceptional musical instruments. When you enter one particular shop in Laojie (Old Street) in Kashi, you will find musical instruments in various shapes on display – totalling several dozen in variety. If you ask about them, you will be told that they represent just one part of the Xinjiang musical instruments – the Uygurs'; those of the Kazak, Kirgiz, Mongolian and Xibe ethnic groups are not included.

As depicted in the murals of the Han (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), Jin (265-420) and Tang (618-

occasions such as weddings. Various melodies escape from the instruments which are strummed, blown or struck.

Travelling in Xinjiang, whether it is to Urümqi, Kuche, Kashi, or Hotian, you will no doubt experience the different folk instruments of the Uygur nationality at the evening song and dance parties arranged for you by your tour guide or



907) dynasties discovered along the ancient Silk Road, there were only 24 different kinds of Uyghur musical instruments. Today, the number has increased to as many as 37.

These musical instruments are brought into full play at celebrations such as the Kurban and Rouzi festivals or other happy

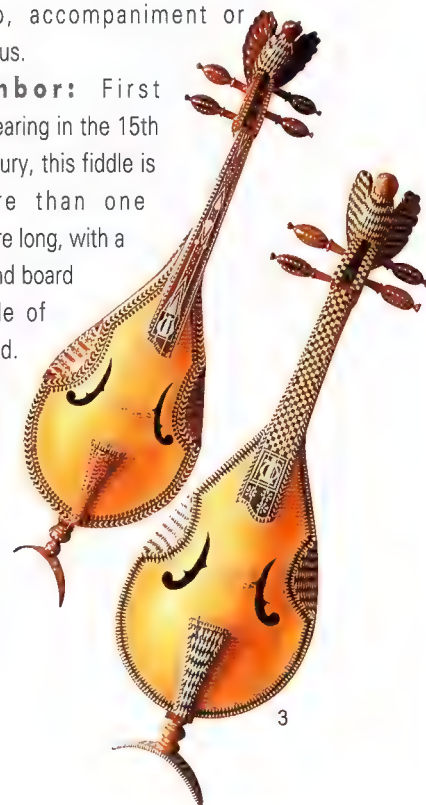
travel agency. The music created by the brisk hand drum, the sounding suona, the booming rewapu and the sob-like dutar is very touching.

The following is a brief introduction to a few of the Uyghur musical instruments:

**Rewapu:** The body of this fiddle is made of

wood with a semicircle sound box covered with hide usually made from sheep, donkey, horse or boa skin. It has five strings and is plucked with a plectrum. The sound it produces is a kind of booming, ringing tone and is used for solo, accompaniment or chorus.

**Tanbor:** First appearing in the 15th century, this fiddle is more than one metre long, with a sound board made of wood.





With five strings, the fiddle is plucked or strummed and has a bright pleasant tone.

**Dutar:** A musical instrument seen in almost every household of the Uygur people, this fiddle's wooden body is in the shape of a large water ladle, with a long finger board. It has two strings which are plucked with the fingers. It is used for solo or chorus.

**Aijieke:** It has a wooden ball-like sound box. The sound board is made of tung timber inside which is a layer of boa hide. The fiddle has four metal strings which are played with a bow made from horse tail hair. The instrument can be used for solo, accompaniment and chorus.

**Huxidar:** This fiddle looks and sounds like a violin both in shape and tone. It is exquisitely made as if it were a piece of art. "Huxidar" means "joyful fiddle melody".



4


**Surnai:** This instrument looks like the Han people's suona. The mouth of the tube is made of copper, and the body and bell are of wood.

**Naiyi:** This is similar to the bamboo flute used by the Han people. The skilful movement of the musician's fingers over the holes produces beautiful melodic music.

**Along:** In ancient times this plucked instrument had 37 strings, but today the number has reduced to 20 strings.

**Dapu:** It is a hand drum similar to the tambourine. Its round frame is made of wood covered with the hide of sheep, donkey or boa. It has many copper or steel jingles. During a performance, the musician uses both hands alternatively to strike the drum.

If you are interested in collecting the musical instruments of the Uygurs, a good place to make your purchases is the National

Musical Instruments Factory in Urümqi. The instrument shops in Kashi also offer instruments at reasonable prices. 

*Photos & Article by Shi Baoxiu  
Translated by Xiong Zhenru*



5

1. Musical instruments such as rewapu, tanborand sunar hang above the shop counter.
2. Craftsmen making and selling musical instruments at the privately-owned shop in Kashi.
3. Huxitar, which is similar to the violin but more exquisitely decorated.
4. The two-stringed dutar is the most popular plucked musical instrument.
5. The statue of the founder of Mukamu, a type of folk music, stands in the city centre of Shache.
6. Folk music players at a festival.



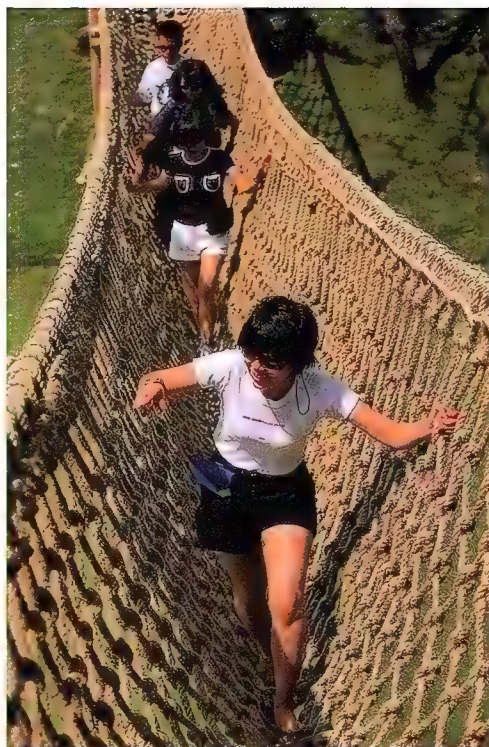
6







# RETURNING TO THE GREEN WORLD



Some time ago I heard that a place existed in Shekou, Shenzhen, where city people could get "recharged", it was called "The Green World". How alluring the place sounded! The idea of recharging myself appealed to me, and so I decided to go there one summer weekend.

## An Enchanting Green World

To get there I needed to take a bus, board a boat, go through customs and then take another bus. Wherever I went, I was surrounded by hoards of people and the hubbub of noise and voices. But as soon as I reached Yueliang (Moon) Bay and embarked on the road to Mount Nanshan, the noise suddenly disappeared and people became scarce. Passing through a long corridor draped with wisteria, an explosion of green unfolded before my eyes; the entire mountain was overgrown with lush pine trees, bamboo, and various kinds of broad-leafed trees whose names I did not know. The foot of the mountain was clothed in a forest of green litchi trees. Several log cabins and small white-washed villas were visible in the verdant forest half way up the mountain. The scene was breathtaking. As someone who permanently resides in a noisy city, used to seeing only grey high-rise buildings, cement roads, and busy shopping centres, I became intoxicated as soon as I stepped into this green world, and like someone with the promise of a beautiful dream, I threw myself into it.

## "Snakes" in the Melon Patch

Following some road signs, I headed straight to a vegetable garden located on a mountain slope. Inside, a crowd of people stood admiring

Left page: Having fun in the rain forest

Above: Crossing this unique bridge gives one a thrill.



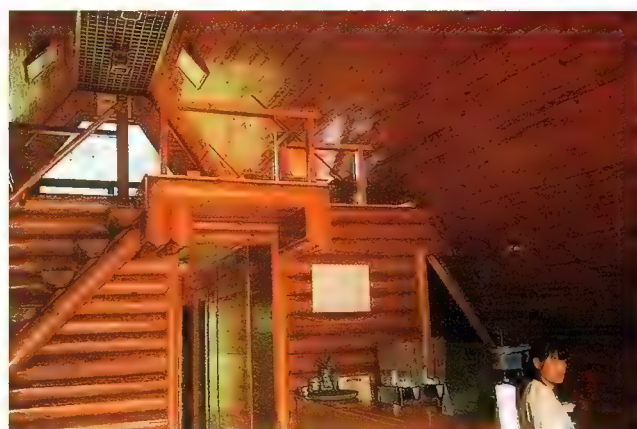


1

three surprisingly big pumpkins, the smallest of which was two feet in a diameter. One naughty boy lay on top of one of them, his ear pinned against its golden yellow skin, apparently believing there was someone hiding inside. Stranger still were those S-shaped melons hanging down from the wooden trellis like long snakes. Timid ladies would gasp in fright as they came across them. Among the garden's everyday produce were also gourds, calabash and cucumber. Today, I finally saw how they grew – their vines, leaves and flowers.

### Eating Fresh Litchi

Another spectacular sight greeted me as I entered the orchard. Different kinds of fruit not only dazzled my eyes but also made my mouth



2



3

water. Huge mangoes weighed down their branches and Taiwan papaya hung on the trees like candied haws on a stick, while baby fruit of Japanese persimmon, Guangxi shaddock and Xinjiang grape were budding out among green leaves. It happened to be the litchi season and clusters of red ripe litchi hung on the trees. Sitting beneath one large tree, a group of old men and women were tasting the fresh fruit and enjoying themselves happily.

In a uniquely-shaped triangular house in the orchard local people sold various kinds of fresh fruit rarely found elsewhere to visitors.

### Dinosaur Habitat

I followed a group of young school children over a bridge and along a



plank road into a mountain valley covered by tropical forest. All of a sudden, the schoolchildren ahead of me began to shout loudly. I went ahead to have a look and found a dinosaur's head stretching out from the dense trees. It was a wax sculpture of a brontosaurus. Other prehistoric beasts appeared as I walked through the valley, each occupying its own section of forest.

### Trying a Hand at Pottery Making

On the mountain slope, set between the Folk Arts Square and the Camping Area, is a pottery exhibition hall and workshop. The exhibition hall displays many masterpieces by famous ceramists, some of which are for sale. If the mood takes you, you can also try your hand at pottery by attending one of the workshops, some masters even accept apprentices and teach them the art of pottery.

A great many visitors are unable to resist the temptation to have a go themselves. I saw many sit at the wheel, take a mass of clay and mould it into a jar or a vase with their hands. They engraved their name, or one or two meaningful words, before it was dried in the oven. Then they painted and glazed it before the semi-finished product was placed into the furnace for the final firing. After an hour or so a pottery masterpiece emerged.



### Returning to Nature

Walking out of the pottery exhibition hall, full of self satisfaction, I took a mountain road through a pine forest. Hammocks were suspended between the trees and people

lounged lazily in the swaying hammocks, enjoying the tranquillity of the forest and the fresh mountain air. They seemed to be living the carefree life of the immortals.

In the camping area half way up the mountain groups of tents were pitched on the open ground between the pine forests. I lifted the flap of one tent and peeked inside to find a sleeping bag and kerosene lamps hanging from the ceiling. Not far away a log cabin provided lodgers with a place to wash or take a shower. It all seemed very convenient and I regretted having come in the wrong season. If I had come in the spring or autumn I could quite easily imagine myself living in those "nests"



1. No one would believe such a large pumpkin exists, without seeing it with their own eyes.
2. It is a pleasure to taste fresh fruit juice sold in this uniquely-shaped wooden building.
3. The camping area set on a mountain slope
4. These potteries are already fired and are waiting for their owners to collect them.
5. The pleasure of creating pottery with your own hands
6. These snake-like melons are a rare sight.







surrounded by the wilderness, sleeping amid the mixed chorus of the sighing wind through the pine trees and the croaking of insects, to wake up in the morning to bird song. It would truly be romantic!

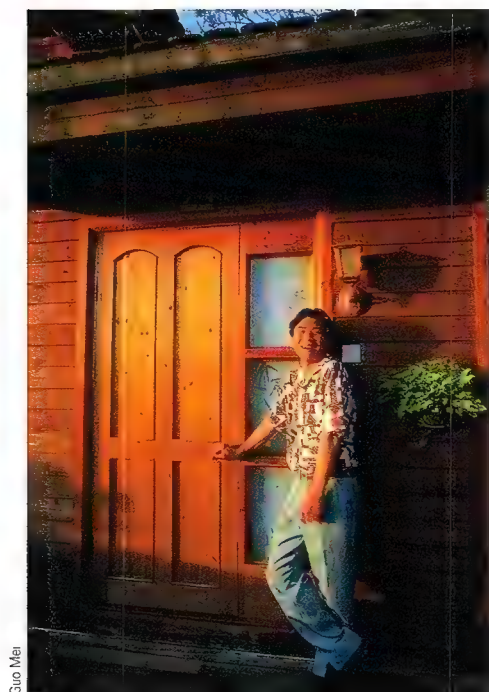
On the other side of the valley more than 20 small log cabins were scattered in the forest, surrounded by fragrant grass, flowers and strangely-shaped pine trees. It resembled a huntsmen's village.

If you do manage to spend a weekend in the verdant forests of the green world, the fatigue and worries that have plagued you through the week will be gone like a puff of smoke. Your mood will be so carefree and happy, just as if you had drunk a glass of mellow wine. Such is the charm of "The Green World".



*Photos & Article by Shi Baoxiu*

*Translated by Xiong Zhenru*



Guo Mei

2

1. Western-style log cabins scattered through the pine forest
2. The pine log cabin is full of simplistic charm and appeal.
3. Open-air swimming pool surrounded by verdant grass and trees

## TRAVELLER'S TIPS

### Transport

**By sea:** Ferries to Shekou leave from the China-Hong Kong City pier at Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. Upon arrival at Shekou take a taxi.

**By land:** First get to Luohu via the Kowloon-Guangzhou Railway. Then take a taxi or mini-bus. Alternatively, take the shuttle bus that runs between Hong Kong and Shenzhen Bay and then change to a taxi or mini-bus. You may also fly to Guangzhou and then change to train or bus, or fly directly to Shenzhen from other Chinese cities.

### Accommodation

Standard room in a log-cabin: HK\$960; Villa: HK\$5,800; Tent: HK\$120 for two people sharing or HK\$200 for three people sharing.

### Activities

Swimming (adult: HK\$60; child: HK\$40, no time limit), fishing (HK\$30 for each 4 hours, fishing rod and bait included) and tennis (day: HK\$30/hr; evening: HK\$40/hr)

### Pottery Class Tuition

Adult: HK\$60; child: HK\$40

### Dining Facilities

Chinese and Western restaurants and bars. Barbecue sites and stores.



3





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A C T I O N

# ***STRUGGLE THROUGH THE GOBI DESERT***



## ***AN ACCOUNT OF THE LANZHOU - DUNHUANG RALLY***

Photos by Chen Huai and Wu' Guanping  
Article by Chen Huai





It was drizzling intermittently on August 9, 1996. The Lanzhou Gymnasium Square was packed with racing trucks. The eye-catching characters on the stickers read:

The original route was to cover 234.8 kilometres in total, and was to consist of five sections, with stop-overs at Wuwei, Shandan, Linze, Anxi and Dunhuang. At the finishing line of each section the arrival time of each truck was to be accurately recorded. He who covered the entire distance in the shortest time was declared the winner. However, only four sections of the planned five were traversed, with a total distance of 141.4 kilometres, but this was no meant feat given the fact that the competitors were all amateurs.



In August, a car rally took place in the vast Gobi Desert between Lanzhou, capital of Gansu Province, and Dunhuang, a place famed for its splendid grottoes. Following a 141-kilometre-long route which threaded its way through the great wilderness and past numerous passes and beacon towers on the Great Wall, 40 amateur racers pitted their mettle and stamina against the odds of nature. The 10-day rally earned the few who won their much coveted medals, while most of the others gained useful experience and learnt a few lessons.

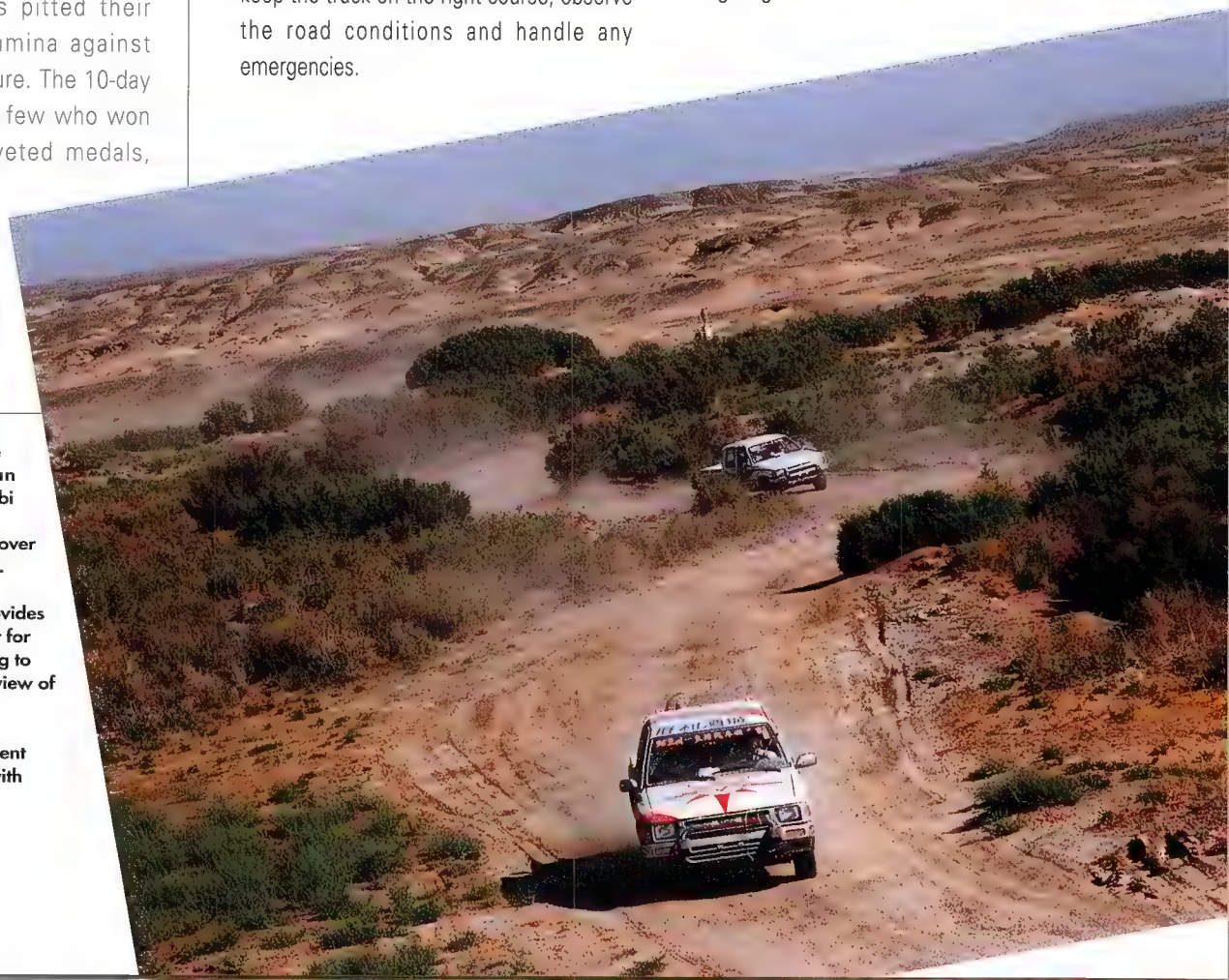
"Lanzhou-Dunhuang Truck Rally of the Ninth Provincial Games".

Competing in the rally were 20 Chinese-made light trucks. Each was manned by a driver and a navigator whose task was to keep the truck on the right course, observe the road conditions and handle any emergencies.

### Crossing the Wushaoling Ridge

As soon as the order was given at 9:00 a.m. the mighty motorcade sped out of Lanzhou guided by police cars, along Highway 109 and embarked on Highway 312 by way of Zhongchuan. The sky was overcast with black clouds and the drizzling continued. But this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the participants as they started out on this unusual journey.

At 1:00 p.m. the motorcade stopped for lunch at Wushengyi, a town west of Yongdeng.



1. Roaring across the foothills of the Qilian Mountains and the Gobi Desert (by Chen Huai)
2. The motorcade climbs over the Wushaoling Ridge. (by Chen Huai)
3. This beacon tower provides the only vantage point for photographers seeking to capture a panoramic view of the Gobi Desert. (by Wu Pingguan)
4. Driving across an ancient riverbed overgrown with red willow bushes (by Wu Pingguan)





As the trucks were scaling the Wushaoling Ridge in the afternoon, it started to rain again. Behind the veil of misty rain, the procession looked imposing in an ethereal way, the hum of the engines evocative of the tinkling of caravan bells on the Silk Road in days gone by.

At 7:00 p.m. the sun was setting as the motorcade drove into Wuwei.

### Mishaps at the Great Wall

According to plan, the motorcade left Wuwei early in the morning, August 10, and headed for the section near Hexipu. This course, relatively smooth and short at 14.2 kilometres, was deliberately chosen so that the rally could get off to a good start.

The trucks set off one by one at two-minute intervals, along a route cordoned off with red flags. In an instance they vanished into the clouds of dust they had churned up.

The competitors had been fully briefed by the organisational committee that the course was to run south of the Great Wall, which served as a clear landmark for drivers and navigators alike.

All the participants were

well-informed of this, but once in action, many of them simply forgot! Most of the racing trucks deviated from the course by driving beyond the Ming-dynasty Great Wall. As a result nine trucks were eliminated from the race. One of them, Truck No.

17, turned over as it went astray, but fortunately the driver and navigator were unhurt.

At the end of the opening day the situation was rather chaotic. At the finishing line staff members were busy looking for the whereabouts of the lost trucks, and ironically some of the rescue crews were themselves stranded in drifting sand dunes! The silence of the great wilderness was shattered by blaring walkie-talkies.

A gloomy atmosphere prevailed over the motorcade as

it proceeded to Shandan. In the evening, it was announced that due to unexpected events, the second leg of the rally was to be abandoned. Thus, on August 11 the trucks drove directly from Shandan to Linze.

### Beacon Tower – a Solitary Witness

The rally continued on the next day to the Gobi Desert adjacent to Badain Jaran Desert north of Linze County. Drawing lessons from what had happened the previous day, the organisational committee decided to cut the length of this section from 76.6 kilometres down to 25 kilometres.

Huge sand dunes loomed menacingly along the route of the race. Camels in groups





of two or three could be spotted grazing on tiny green patches that studded the desert.

The solitary form of a beacon tower sat by the route like a wise old man looking down with folded arms, as the vehicles whipped up huge clouds of choking dust. Once they had driven by everything returned on an even keel, and wild hares began hopping about gain.

It was lunch time. The sun beat down mercilessly from a whitened sky as we picnicked on the desert. We were soon surrounded by a group of herdsmen who had come all the way by jeep to watch the truck rally. Among them I saw quite a few children, their curious eyes wide open in amazement.

The engine of truck No. 20 was broken, so the organisational committee allowed them to use another truck to complete the race. No one could have anticipated at that moment that this new No. 20 would go on to win the gold medal.

On August 13, we drove from Jiuquan to Anxi. The weather was getting even hotter. There was no escape from the heat, even a mirage could only bring the slightest suggestion of a shadow. In this part of the world life looked especially fragile and paltry. Someone mentioned Yu Chunshun, who died not long ago while traversing Lop Nur on foot and we all felt

sad. He was a hero, no question about it. By pitting flesh and blood against nature, he has immortalised man's indomitable spirit.

### The Rally Continued in Anxi on August 14.

After breakfast, the motorcade headed for Tashi Township south of the county seat. The course was set to run through a hilly desert between Tashi Township and the

foothills of the Qilian Mountains.

This is a mysterious place. The vestiges of a bygone epoch are visible everywhere. The ruins of old castles, monasteries and tombs are clustered along with traces of a dry river course. The boundless desert, the exotic Yadang topography, the red willow bushes and the variegated poplar trees – all added up to a landscape typical of Western China.

#### 1. Rescuers help to turn the truck over.

Surprisingly, they find it can still be driven.  
(by Wu Pingguan)

#### 2. In this marshland the racing trucks send mud splashing in all directions. (by Wu Pingguan)

#### 3. Following a zigzagging course through the foothills of the Qilian Mountains (by Chen Huai)

#### 4. Awed by the venerated age of the crumbling pile of ancient tombs in Tashi Township, Anxi County, drivers and photographers have their photographs taken in front of the ruins. (by Wu Pingguan)

#### 5. Awaiting rescue: The smooth desert is highly deceptive, for it is full of life-threatening traps. (by Wu Pingguan)





Covering 40.8 kilometres across the ancient river course, red willow bushes and the foothills of the Qilian Mountains, this section of the rally was relatively more difficult than previous ones. But the drivers had obviously drawn from their previous experience, and they all finished this section brilliantly. Not a single accident was reported.

### Excitement at the Finishing Line

After the race on the Anxi section had ended, the motorcade made its way to Dunhuang, where the following day, August 15, the entire rally would draw to a halt.

It was a fine day. The photographers arrived with the judges just before the race began at 7:00 a.m.

The starting point was situated northwest of the Danghe Reservoir outside Dunhuang, and the finishing line had been set close by the famous Han-dynasty Yumen Pass. At 61.4 kilometres, the last section was to be the longest of the entire rally.

At 9:40 a.m. the first truck set off. More than 40 minutes later, it had already reached its destination. As each truck crossed the finishing line the drivers cheered at each other in congratulation. Then they too climbed atop their vehicles, and shouted encouragement as each new arrival dashed across the finishing line.

Only 10 of the original 20 who started had made it to the 2,000-year-old Yumen Pass, but everyone looked triumphant. Having endured many hardships, they had conquered the mighty Gobi Desert.

But one truck, No. 8, was still missing!

### Lost in the Wilderness

Truck No. 8 was conspicuous by its absence. Having registered the best record on all previous legs of the rally, it was a sure-fire winner. But, it transpired that the driver and his

navigator had lost their way. As if possessed, they had deviated from the racing course at a S-shaped turn just four kilometres from the finishing line.

Having driven on for more than an hour, they knew they were lost. By the time they arrived at the finishing line with the help of a local shepherd, they managed to beat the deadline by a few minutes, but their ranking dropped to last.

The driver, having let the gold medal slip through his fingers, drummed his vehicle with knuckle-white fists. He wanted to cry, but no tears came. Indeed, that is the cruelty of the game; it recognises only the winner.

The rally was over but the story was not.... the driver and navigator of Truck No. 8 took the shepherd back to the great desert. On their way back they lost their way again!

After having wandered around helplessly for an entire afternoon, the fuel gauge on their truck indicated that they were running out of gas.

They were about to abandon the vehicle when one of them spotted a forest near by. In the forest they came across the warden, to whom they offered all the money they had – 10 yuan – in return for his help. The





man accepted the money without so much as a thank you. He mounted his motorcycle, and led the way to the highway which turned out to be just nine kilometres away.

That night, sitting in the lobby of a hotel in Dunhuang, we spoke with the driver and navigator of Truck No. 8 and asked them what they could possibly have done to save their lives had they not found the warden. Choked by sobs, they told about their desperation and how they had yearned for their parents who brought them into this world, and their children who were the continuation of their lives.

As I listened in silence, I wondered, but dared not ask, if they had also been worrying about losing the gold medal.

The darkness was thickening. Finally, when my friends had said goodbye to each other and retired to their rooms, I stepped out of the hotel.

In the star-spangled sky I tried to

Occasionally a meteor shot through the void above and then everything returned to normal, as if nothing had ever happened.

Returning to my hotel room I tossed and turned in my bed haunted by their experience. Sleep evaded me for the first time during the entire journey.

On my way back to Lanzhou, the lines

of the celebrated poet Wang Anshi (1021-1089) of the Song Dynasty came to mind:

*"The road ahead having disappeared  
Without a trace.*

*In helplessness, I sat down*

*Only to see clouds gathering in the sky."*

I regard the driver and navigator of Truck No. 8 as lucky, for at least once in their lives they had experienced anxiety when

the road ahead of them had suddenly vanished, and somehow they had managed to survive.

What they have learned from that experience is definitely more precious than the gold medal they did not win.

Translated by Ling Yuan



1. The high speed of the trucks, and the bumpiness of the road are reasons why even tightly fastened spare tyres come loose and fly off. (by Wu Pingguan)
2. Three kilometres from Yumen Pass, the trucks race towards the finishing line. (by Wu Pingguan)
3. Competitors in the rally posing in front of the Jiayu Pass, the west end of the Great Wall. (by Wu Pingguan)
4. Having endured all sorts of hardships the rally drivers sign autographs after arriving at Yumen Pass. (by Chen Huai)



ENCOUNTER

GAO, THE

GRASSHOPPER-MAKER

Hearing the name "Henry", few people would suspect it belongs to a local Chinese in Kunming who carries the name "Gao Bingcun" on his ID card. However, having been called by this Western name for almost ten years, his true Chinese name seems to have been forgotten.

When I went to visit him at his home, he was weaving a grasshopper. I began our conversation by asking how he got his English name. "The improvement and normalisation of the Sino-US relations depended on Mao Zedong, Richard Milhous Nixon, Zhou Enlai and Henry Alfred Kissinger," he said. "I respect Kissinger a lot because he has worked his way up from an ordinary person to someone who is important in American politics. I also

like Henry Bunsen, a French philosopher. So, I began to call myself Henry after them and have been called by this name since 1987."

Henry Gao continued the work on the grasshoppers while talking to me. A native of Guandu in a Kunming suburb, his mother died in 1961 when he was only three years old. At five, he and his father moved to Nujiang Prefecture and he eventually learned the language of the Lisu people, an ethnic minority living in the area. When he was in the second grade at elementary school, he liked to play chess and often beat a teacher of the fourth grade. To gain himself a chess player, the



Henry Gao selling his grasshoppers to foreign tourists.

teacher transferred Henry to his class in the fourth grade. Henry admitted that he had not received much middle school education because during the years of the Cultural Revolution all schools were closed.

In 1975, he was recruited by the local Public Security Bureau to work at a reformatory, where he often attended psychological lectures given to the inmates. His interest in reading was triggered and he attended classes of the education department at the Yunnan Normal University. There, he took a series of courses, including History of Western Philosophy, History of Western Literature, Classical Music of the West, International Politics, Economics and Trade.

Seeing that he had finished a dozen or so grasshoppers, I suggested we go to sell them. I was really curious about how he was going to promote his products. Our first stop was a coffee shop opened by a retired American. Gao entered the shop like an old customer. After exchanged greetings with the owner, he began to introduce his



Gao Bingcun, also known as Henry Gao.



grasshoppers to the coffee or beer drinkers, most of whom were foreign tourists or guest teachers in Kunming. While talking, he took a few straws out of his bucket and showed them how to make a grasshopper with their own hands. The foreigners joined him immediately. Though they all worked hard, their efforts looked strange, if they could still be called "grasshoppers". But there was a lot of fun and everybody enjoyed it. With laughter and jokes, Gao sold his products. Happily, he sang them an English song. This special marketing strategy helped Gao earn a better income than others in the same trade.

After we sat down in a teahouse, Gao told me how and where he learned the skill of making grasshoppers. In 1990, he went on a tour along the Three Gorges with a foreign couple. He saw an old man making straw grasshoppers in a Chongqing street. After returning to his hotel, he asked the hotel staff for a few straws and learned how to weave the small creature from a local man. "I found it was easy and it took only two to three minutes to make one,"

more money," he added.

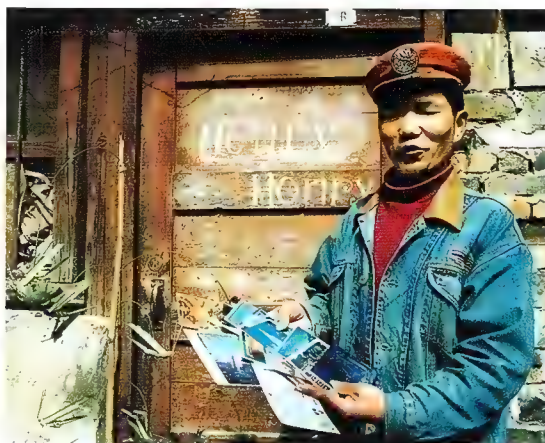
Around noon, we arrived at Cuihu (Green Lake) Park which was thronged with people, many of them parents with their kids. Gao stopped talking to me and began working on his grasshoppers, weaving and selling, and sometimes bargaining. Before long, he had almost sold out all of his products.

On our way back, Gao told me that he once applied the knowledge of commercial psychology to the sale of a flower fertiliser and obtained amazing results. Summing up his experiences, he wrote a textbook on commercial psychology and offered to lecture on the subject in some small organisations. Eventually, he won some fame and was often invited to lecture in major institutes such as the Yunnan Provincial Bureau of Commerce and the Kunming Department Store. He was also invited to attend a symposium on commercial psychology held at Jiangnan University in Wuhan. "The moment I began reading my paper at the symposium was the most glorious in my life," he recalled. The lectures brought him money and

he did not need to work as a cook, Gao said. "Selling grasshoppers is my fifth job," Gao told me. "The first is teaching English and I have at present three students, all peddlers, who believe that by learning English, they can make more money. I sometimes work as a tour guide for foreigners, too. My second job is singing English songs at night clubs,

giving three or four shows a night. The third job is lecturing, unfortunately, it is not working well now because the audience is vanishing. The fourth is to write name plates for shops." While the

first four jobs are either seasonal or part time, Gao said, the fifth-making and selling grasshoppers-is the most stable and also the one that brings him the most reliable



Gao displaying letters he has received from foreign friends

income.

Asked how he spent his spare time, Gao said, "After selling my grasshoppers, I attend lectures, or go to movies and concerts to satisfy my interest in Western culture." He then added that two-thirds of his thinking was Western while the remaining one-third was influenced by Zhuang Zi, an ancient Chinese philosopher. "Zhuang Zi was an optimist. The focus of Zhuang's thinking is to obtain balance in a difficult situation and find oneself new opportunities," Gao said. He said he liked Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche too because his philosophy encourages people to strive on to fight for one's own happiness.

Gao, still single, lives in the dorm of Yunnan University. On the door of his apartment, I saw his name "Henry" written twice in big letters. Inside is the world of Henry Gao where he lives with Western music, straw grasshoppers and the philosophies of Zhuang Zi and Nietzsche. "I am an optimist, but I am a realist too. I emphasise the reality of today, but I also care about tomorrow where my dream lies," he said.

□

Article & photos by Li Zhixiong  
Translated by Eva Liu



Gao said. "If I could sell 40-50 of them each day, 50 cents each, my income could be as much as that of two professors." He decided to make a living by selling straw grasshoppers. "The price has now risen to two yuan each, so I'm making even



## Great Wall Bricks, Hebei

In Shijiazhuang Chinese archaeologists have found the remains of some 20 kilns from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) that were used to make bricks for the Great Wall.

At one of the kilns the archaeologists discovered 403 bricks, each measuring 41 cm long, 20 cm wide and 10 cm thick. After testing, experts said the brick-making techniques of the Ming were similar to, if not better than, those used today. They further said the discovery is proof that the bricks used to build the Great Wall were made at the foot of the wall with local earth, which obviously kept costs to a minimum.

## Salar Cultural Fair, Qinghai

The Salar ethnic group, located only in north-western Qinghai Province held its first cultural festival in Xuhua Salar Autonomous County. The Salar people, now 60,000 strong, believe that their forefathers came from Central Asia on horseback over 700 years ago. People of the Salar ethnic group are Muslims who speak their own language but write in Chinese.

## China Northern Airlines Soars with MD-90s

A new MD-90 passenger plane has been delivered to China Northern Airlines by McDonnell Douglas. The US aircraft-maker used the aircraft for a 28,000-mile world demonstration tour during which it visited 12 countries and ended in China.

China Northern, one of China's backbone airlines, has ordered 11 of the 153-seater MD-90, which is said to be the quietest, cleanest commercial aircraft in its class in the world. In addition, Chinese aircraft-makers in Shanghai, Xi'an, Chengdu and Shenyang have secured contracts with McDonnell Douglas to build and assemble 20 MD-90s.

## Inner Mongolia Celebrates 50th Birthday

Hohhot in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region is busy with preparations to mark the 50th anniversary of its founding this year, as well as the success of China's ethnic autonomy policy during the last half century.

The ethnic autonomy policy was first implemented on May 1, 1947 under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. Its successes can be seen in the promotion of Chinese unity, and the liberation of minority people from discrimination and oppression. Under the policy local people will also benefit from 17 projects launched by the autonomous region's government, including airport expansion, construction of village roads and a programme to provide drinking water to 3.8 million herdsmen and urban residents.

Celebrations to mark the occasion will be held from July 18-25 in conjunction with the second Inner Mongolian Trade Affairs and the Grassland Tourism Festival.

## Fossilised Forest, Xinjiang

A fossilised forest of 3.8 square kilometres has just been discovered in the Junggar Basin in the Gobi Desert in Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Chinese geologists and archaeologists believe it is the world's second largest fossilised forest (the largest is in the United States of America). Geologists say the area took shape some 150 million years ago, when *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, ginkgos, birch and other trees in a primeval forest were buried underground, and gradually hardened by groundwater that contained silicon.

## Rescued Wild Panda Fathers a Baby

Fei Fei was born 24 years ago in Tianquan County, Sichuan Province but was moved to

Chongqing Zoo when the arrow bamboo, the staple food of the giant pandas, began blooming and withering quickly.

Because China has only about 1,000 giant pandas living in the wild and no more than 100 in zoos, every giant panda is vital to China and the rest of the world. Specialists have spared no effort to protect them, for example, the zoo at Chongqing has opened up a tract of land planted with arrow bamboo in Jinyun Mountain, 100 kilometres away. The bamboo is sent to the zoo every day where Fei Fei eats eight kilograms of bamboo, fruits, milk, minced meat and powdered calcium a day.

Now 24 years old, Fei Fei surprises his zoo keepers by fathering a baby panda with his mate Xi Xi, which was thought impossible for him as pandas usually only live no more than 23 years.

## Hospitality Hotel, Shanghai

The Jinjiang Tower of Shanghai has won a Five-Star Diamond Award from the American Academy of Hospitality Sciences. The ceremony took place in Shanghai recently and Jinjiang is the fourth Chinese company to win such an award. Previous award winners are Air China, Haier Corp and the Beijing Kunlun Hotel. The criteria for the award are based on the quality of hospitality, service, attitude, cleanliness and perceived value of an establishment.

## Tianjin: Phone Numbers to Change

From March 8, 1997 telephone numbers in North China's Tianjin municipality will increase to eight digits from the present seven digits. A "2" will be placed before the current first number. Numbers that remain unchanged are: special three-digit phones that begin with "1", phone numbers that begin with "200", "800", service numbers and all mobile phone numbers.



## Crown in Ruins Found

A team of archaeologists from China and Japan believe they may have found the final resting place of the king of a lost kingdom.

They have unearthed a gold crown and a large number of rare relics in a tomb in the 2,000-year old ruins of a buried city named Jiaohe in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The Sino-Japanese team says the crown, in the style of western Asia, suggests that the tomb's occupant may be a king of the state. But no written relics or evidence have been found in the tomb to support that view. A great quantity of painted pottery, coins, gold and shell ornaments and bronze mirrors have been found buried with the crown.

The experts say the shell ornaments from Korea and gold ornaments from western Asia prove the site was an important stop along the ancient Silk Road. The tomb, dating back to the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), is one of 2,000 tombs found at the ruins.

The site was capital of Jushi State and an important town of the Gaochang State. It became derelict in the 15th Century.

## Genetic Testing to Prevent Panda Inbreeding

Scientists in Yunnan Province have developed a genetic ID technique to determine the fatherhood of giant pandas. Female pandas living in zoos usually have several sexual partners to increase the possibility of pregnancy. This makes it hard to identify the father, leading to inbreeding. Using a new genetic method, scientists at the Kunming Animal Research Institute under the Chinese Academy of Sciences are able to get the answers they need with just a lock of the giant panda's hair, and unlike blood testing, it will not harm the animal. It is expected to be of great help in boosting the population of both captive and wild pandas, of which only 1,000 exist in the wild and 100 in zoos.

## Three Gorges River Cruises to Be Star-Rated

Yangtse River pleasure boats will display star-ratings from this year as part of a campaign by the National Tourism Authority to improve services for visitors to the famous Three Gorges. A record number of tourists flocked to see the Gorge's famous cliff scenery last summer. The water level will rise next year after the river is dammed to control the often deadly flooding and generate hydra-electricity.

## ChinaNet Link

Global One has signed a contract with the Guangxi Posts and Telecommunications Administration to supply equipment to enable the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to be linked with ChinaNet, the country's information superhighway. After completion, the equipment will be able to provide ChinaNet services to 26,000 users, who will also have access to the Internet via ChinaNet.

## Dalian's New Diesel Train

A new diesel train that will speed up China's rail system is about to go into mass production. The Dalian Rolling Stock Plant in Northeast China's Liaoning Province developed the Dongfeng-4D Passenger Train Locomotive to meet the country's need to increase the train speed on four of its trunk lines to 120 km per hour by the year 1997.

## New Telephone Technology, Shanghai

Shanghai's Copytele Electronics Company, a Sino-US joint venture, will soon start producing the Magicom 2000 telephone, which represents new generation of office automation equipment and will be the first in the world to

produce telephones that print their own messages and allow callers to see each other.

## Beijing's New Subway

Beijing Mass Transit Railway Corporation (BMTRC) have ordered 174 railway cars to run on Beijing's Fuxingmen-Bawangfen subway. Government loans amounting to \$94 million from Japan will be used to purchase the cars from the Changchun Car Company. The first group of railway cars will be delivered in 1998 but it is not yet sure when the subway will be open to the public.

## New Expressway, Liaoning

A new 75-km expressway has opened linking Shenyang, capital of Liaoning Province, and Benxi, an industrial city. Built in two stages, the first section was completed in 1994 and linked Shenyang to Xiaobao.

## New Expressway, Guangdong

Workers have completed the eastern section of the Shenzhen-Shantou Expressway in South China's Guangdong Province, which is one of the province's major construction projects. The newly completed section, from Lufeng to Shantou connects to the western section of the Shenzhen-Shantou Expressway.

## Rare dolphin Station, Nanjing

A dolphin protection centre has been set up in Zhenjiang in Jiangsu Province to care for the white-flag dolphin (also called the Yangtse River dolphin). The rare species of dolphin, which is under State protection, has lived in the Yangtse River for more than 20 million years. One of the 12 most endangered species in the world, there are only about 100 of them left.



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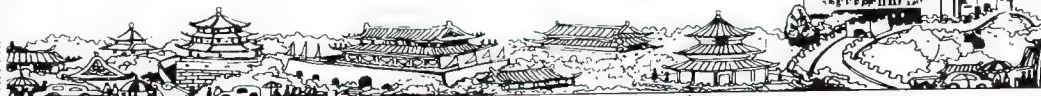
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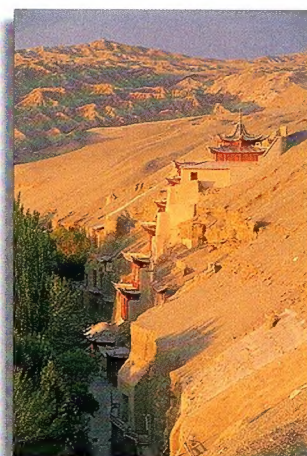
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What are your plans for the four-day Spring Festival holidays? In our next issue we

suggest several **short-distance travel**

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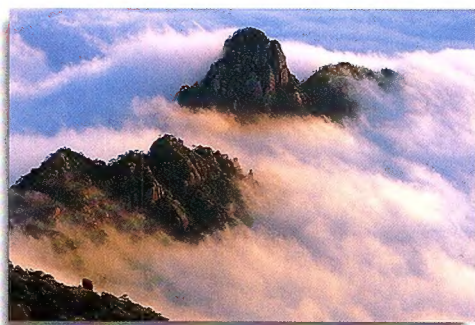
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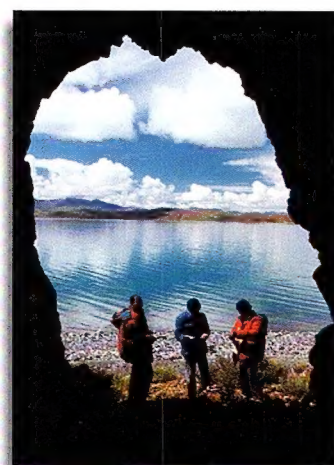
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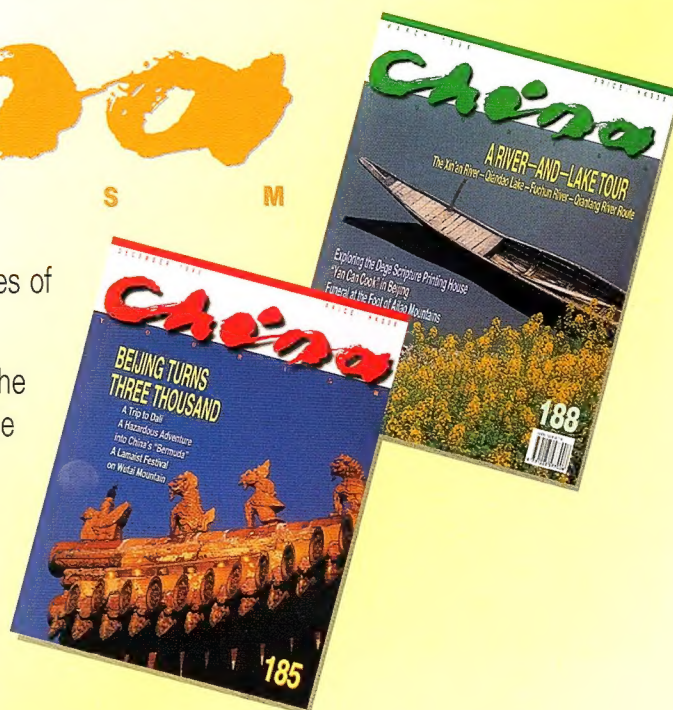
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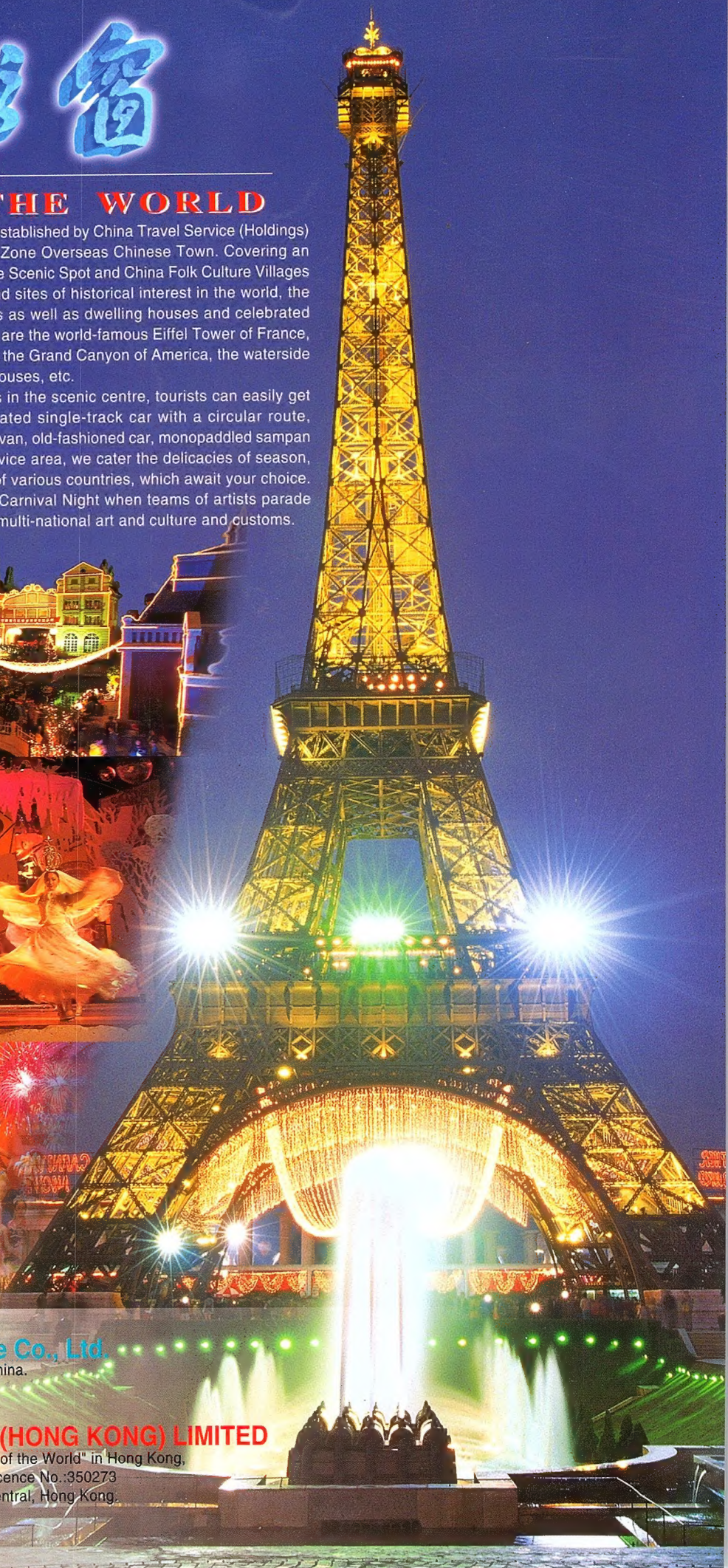
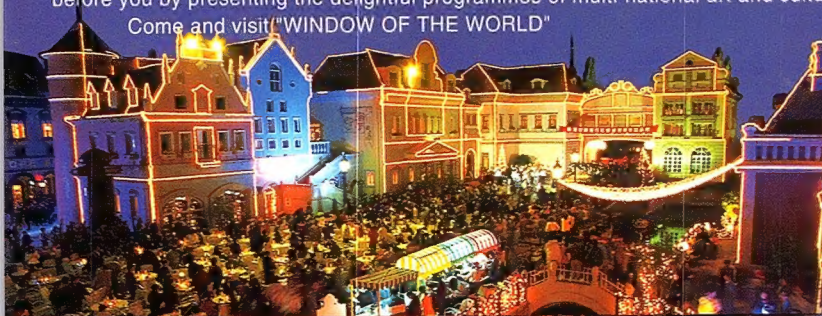


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